



Iran Nuclear Deal Survives

Democrats Block Republican Disapproval Vote

President Barack Obama, accompanied by Secretary of State John Kerry, meets with veterans and Gold Star Mothers to discuss the Iran Nuclear deal, Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015, in the Roosevelt Room at the White House in Washington. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik) Page 3

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Iran Nuclear Deal Survives

ERICA WERNER
DEB RIECHMANN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

The U.S. Senate voted to uphold the hard-fought nuclear accord with Iran on Thursday, with Democrats overcoming ferocious Republican opposition and delivering President Barack Obama a legacy making victory on his top foreign policy priority.

A disapproval resolution for the agreement fell two votes short of the 60 needed to move forward as most Democratic and independent senators banded together against it. Although House Republicans continued to pursue eleventh-hour strategies to derail the international accord and Senate Republicans promised a re-vote, Thursday's outcome all but guaranteed that the disapproval legislation would not reach Obama's desk.

As a result the nuclear deal will move forward unchecked by Congress, an improbable win by Obama in the face of unanimous opposition from Republicans who control Congress, Republican candidates seeking to replace him in the Oval Office and the state of Israel and its allied lobbyists in the U.S.

Beginning next week, Obama will be free to start scaling back U.S. sanctions to implement the agreement negotiated by Iran, the U.S. and five other world powers. The accord aims to constrain Iran's nuclear ambitions in exchange for hundreds of billions of dollars in relief from international sanctions.

"This vote is a victory for diplomacy, for American national security and for the safety and security of the world," the president said in a statement. "Going forward, we will turn to the critical work of implementing and verifying this deal so that Iran cannot pursue a nuclear weapon."

Frustrated Republicans railed against Democrats for using a procedural vote to block final passage of the disapproval resolution, and issued grim warnings about a deal they contend

could serve only to enrich Tehran and leave it closer to building a bomb when constraints begin to ease in 10 or 15 years. They promised that Thursday's vote would not be the Senate's last word, and moments after it was over Senate Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell set the stage for another next week.

"No amount of saying this issue is over makes it over," McConnell declared, adding that if a Republican wins the White House next year, "I say to Iranian observers of the debate, (the deal) will be looked on anew."

But Democrats led by Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada promised that any further votes would have the same outcome "and are just simply a waste of time."

"People around the world should know today's outcome was clear, decisive and final," Reid said.

In the House, Republicans had not given up on blocking the deal against all odds. After backtracking on plans to vote on the disapproval resolution when it began to look short of support in the Senate, House Republicans lined up votes on several related measures. Late Thursday they agreed on a party-line 245-186 vote to a measure specifying that Obama had not properly submitted all documents related to the accord for Congress' review, and therefore a 60-day review clock had not really started.

That will be followed Friday by votes on a bill to approve the accord — which is doomed to fail, but Republicans want to force Democrats to go on record in favor of the agreement — and on a measure preventing Obama from lifting congressionally mandated sanctions on Iran.

"This debate is far from over, and frankly, it's just beginning," said House Speaker John Boehner, a Republican. "This is a bad deal with decades-long consequences for the security of the American people and our allies. □

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Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nev., and Senate Minority Whip Richard Durbin of Ill., answer questions for reporters following the Senate vote on the Iran nuclear agreement on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015. Senate Democrats voted to uphold the hard-fought nuclear accord with Iran on Thursday, overcoming ferocious GOP opposition and delivering President Barack Obama a legacy-making victory on his top foreign policy priority.

(AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)



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Defense Secretary Ash Carter speaks during a news conference at the Pentagon. Carter has reminded the Pentagon's senior intelligence corps that they are expected to give him their unvarnished views, amid allegations that the military command overseeing the war against the Islamic State distorted or altered intelligence assessments to exaggerate progress against the military group, officials said Sept. 10.
(AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

Carter demands honest war intelligence

ROBERT BURNS

AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Ash Carter has reminded the Pentagon's senior intelligence corps that they are expected to give him their unvarnished views, amid allegations that the military command overseeing the war against the Islamic State distorted or altered intelligence assessments to exaggerate progress against the military group, officials said Thursday.

Pentagon press secretary Peter Cook said that after it was publicly disclosed last month that the Pentagon's inspector general was investigating allegations of skewed intelligence reports, Carter directed his top civilian intelligence officer to reinforce the need for honest assessments, including at Central Command, which oversees the war effort.

"Unvarnished, transparent intelligence is what

this secretary expects on a daily basis," Cook said.

Publicly, many senior civilian and military officials have said that while the counter-IS fight is difficult and likely to drag on for years, the U.S.-led coalition is making significant progress against the militant group in both Iraq and Syria, where they control large swaths of territory. Others have been more circumspect. For example, Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said while traveling in Europe this week that the war is "tactically stalemated."

A U.S.-led air campaign against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria has inflicted considerable damage, but the U.S.-trained Iraqi army has yet to recapture key cities lost over the past year, including Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province. Also, the U.S. has made little progress in training moderate Syrian

rebels to form an effective ground force against IS.

Cook was asked Thursday whether Carter shares Dempsey's view that the war is stalemated.

"I don't know if he would use the exact words as Chairman Dempsey, but I think the secretary's been candid about the difficulties, how hard this fight's gonna be, but that he does believe, ultimately, we're gonna prevail, for a variety of reasons," Cook said. "He believes the strategy right now that is being employed is the right strategy."

Asked about Carter's level of concern that intelligence reports reaching his desk may have been improperly changed to inflate war progress, Cook said he would await the outcome of the inspector general's investigation, which was launched after an intelligence officer at Central Command lodged a complaint in July. □

White House: Obama planning to admit more Syrian refugees

D. SUPERVILLE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States is making plans to accept 10,000 Syrian refugees in the coming budget year, a significant increase from the 1,500 people who have been cleared to resettle in the U.S. since civil war broke out in the Middle Eastern country more than four years ago, the White House said Thursday.

The White House has been under heavy pressure to do more than just provide money to help meet the growing humanitarian crisis in Europe. Tens of thousands of people from war-torn countries in the Middle East and Africa are risking their lives and dying en masse during desperate attempts to seek safe haven on the continent.

The refugees from Syria, however, would be people who are already in the pipeline and waiting to be let into the United States, not the thousands working their way through eastern Europe after landing in Greece. It was not immediately clear how admitting a larger number of Syrian refugees who are in the processing pipeline would help alleviate the crisis that European countries are grappling with.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said about \$4 billion that the administration has provided to relief agencies and others is the most effective way for the U.S. to help shoulder the crisis, but that President Barack Obama has decided that admitting more Syrian refugees in the budget year that begins Oct. 1 would also help boost the U.S. response.

About 17,000 Syrians have been referred over the last few years to the U.S. for resettlement by the U.N. refugee agency. About 1,500 are in the U.S., with another 300 scheduled to be allowed in this month. That leaves about 15,000 Syrians waiting for the clearance process to conclude, according to the State Department.

Obama would like to admit 10,000 of those, according to Earnest's announcement.

U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby also said the 10,000 Syrians will come from the pool of 17,000 people referred to the U.S. by the U.N. agency.

Earnest said earlier this week that the administration has been looking at a "range of approaches" for assisting U.S. allies with 340,000 people freshly arrived from the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Many are fleeing parts of Iraq that are under the Islamic State group's control. The 1,500 Syrians who are resettling in the U.S. represent a small percentage of the 11.6 million people who have been chased out of the country or uprooted from their homes due to the civil war in Syria.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry told lawmakers Wednesday that the U.S. will increase its worldwide quota for resettling refugees by 5,000, from 70,000 to 75,000 next year — and the number could still rise, according to two officials and a congressional aide who requested anonymity to discuss a private meeting. □

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After insulting Fiorina, Trump tested by wave of criticism

STEVE PEOPLES
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A wave of criticism from Republicans and Democrats alike rose Thursday after Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump insulted the physical appearance of Carly Fiorina, his party's only female White House contender. It's a new test for the candidacy of the brash-talking Trump, whose standing in opinion polls has surged despite a series of comments that might well have doomed a traditional politician.

Republican Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal called Trump "a madman," while Democrat Hillary Rodham Clinton said the billionaire real-estate mogul "seems to delight in insulting women every chance he gets." Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush dismissed Trump's latest comments as "small and inappropriate." And Fiorina, the target of Trump's latest insult, suggested she was "getting under his skin."

In some ways, Thursday was a day no different from others in an unpredictable 2016 presidential primary campaign, a messy contest in which Trump has emerged as a dominant and divisive figure. But the day also featured an escalation of criticism from Trump's detractors in both parties, who seem to be multiplying.

The spark was an interview published Wednesday by Rolling Stone, in which Trump said Fiorina's face would make her unelectable. The magazine quoted Trump as saying of the former technology executive: "Look at that face! Would anyone vote



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks on Capitol Hill in Washington. A wave of criticism from Republicans and Democrats alike rose Thursday after GOP presidential front-runner Donald Trump insulted the physical appearance of his party's only female White House contender. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

for that? Can you imagine that, the face of our next president?" The chorus of anti-Trump Republicans now includes Bush, Jindal, Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, former New York Gov. George Pataki and retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson, who is running second to Trump in several early polls and challenged Trump's Christian faith this week.

In a speech at the National Press Club in Washington, Jindal called Trump an "egomaniacal madman who has no principles," describing him as a "carnival act."

"The silly summer season is over," Jindal said. "It's time to get serious about saving our country. It's time to send Donald Trump back to reality TV."

At a rally in Columbus, Ohio, at roughly the same time, Clinton took a swipe at Trump, whose derogatory remarks about Fiorina are merely his latest insults directed at a woman.

"There is one particular candidate who just seems

to delight in insulting women every chance he gets," Clinton told a cheering crowd of supporters. "I have to say, if he emerges I would love to debate him."

The Fiorina remark is only the latest comment directed at women that's led to criticism of Trump. After the first GOP debate, during which Fox News' Megyn Kelly asked him about past derogatory comments about women, Trump launched a series of insults at the TV anchor — including telling CNN that Kelly had "blood coming out of her eyes, blood coming out of her wherever" during the debate.

Trump tried to paper over his remarks about Fiorina in an interview with CNN, saying he wasn't talking about her appearance but her "persona."

In a subsequent interview on ABC's "The View," he said, "I do have a very big heart," and then he offered a message directly to women: "I want to say that I cherish women, and

I will protect women, and I will take care of women, and I have great respect for women."

He said his wife and daughter have encouraged him to speak more about "women's health issues, because they know how strongly and committed I am to it."

"Jeb Bush and to a large extent Hillary are not com-

mitted like I'm committed," he said.

Bush, who has emerged as a leading Trump critic in recent weeks, came to Fiorina's defense Thursday. He tweeted that the "demeaning remarks are small and inappropriate for anyone, much less a presidential candidate." "Carly & country deserve better. Enough," Bush wrote. □

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NYC police boss, mayor apologize to ex-tennis pro

TOM HAYS

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York City police commissioner and mayor offered apologies to tennis star James Blake Thursday as officials scrambled to deal with fallout from his mistaken arrest outside a Manhattan hotel. The officer who forcefully arrested Blake was also put on desk duty as the episode became a headache for the department at a time when the city is hosting the U.S. Open, one of tennis' premier events and where Blake has been a fan favorite.

"I spoke to Mr. Blake a short time ago and personally apologized for yesterday's incident," Police Commissioner William Bratton said in a statement Thursday evening. "Mr. Blake said he would like to meet with the mayor and me at a future date, which we would be agreeable to."

Mayor Bill de Blasio, speaking on cable's NY1, also publicly apologized saying of his arrest, "this shouldn't have happened and he shouldn't have been treated this way."



In this 2013 photo, James Blake plays tennis at the French Open tournament in Paris. Internal affairs detectives are investigating claims by Blake that he was thrown to the ground and then handcuffed while mistakenly being arrested Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2015, at a New York hotel, police said.

(AP Photo/Michel Spingler)

Earlier on Thursday, the 35-year-old Blake said he was never told why he was forced to the ground and handcuffed.

"I'd like an explanation for how they conducted themselves because I think we all need to be held accountable for our actions, and police as well," Blake said on ABC's "Good Morning America."

The mishap unfolded Wednesday outside the Grand Hyatt New York ho-

tel, where detectives were investigating a credit card fraud ring that was having retail items brought there by a delivery service, police said. A retailer had given police a photo of a man who was involved, police said.

"If you look at that photo, it is a remarkable likeness of Mr. James Blake," Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce said at a hastily called news conference. "They look like twins." The confusion inten-

sified when a cooperating witness misidentified Blake as a suspect while Blake was standing outside the hotel waiting to head to the U.S. Open. Blake said he looked up from his cellphone and saw a plainclothes officer charging him before he was body-slammed.

"I was standing there doing nothing — not running, not resisting, in fact, smiling," Blake said.

Blake told officers to check his identification, and he was released. He said the officer never identified himself.

The NYPD took the arresting officer off the street while it conducts an internal investigation. After seeing a security video of the officer grabbing Blake, forcing him to the sidewalk and rear-handcuffing him, the commissioner said, "I have concerns about the takedown." Part of the internal inquiry will focus on why the chain of command wasn't notified of the mistake.

"Mr. Blake has made a number of comments to the press — that's how we first became aware of the matter," Bratton said. □

Arizona police confirmed 11th vehicle attack

PAUL DAVENPORT

JACQUES BILLEAUD

Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Arizona authorities confirmed Thursday that 11 vehicles area have been shot with bullets or other projectiles in the last two weeks, nearly all of them on freeways in the Phoenix area.

The latest confirmed shooting involved a commercial truck whose driver reported a bullet hole in the cargo area Thursday morning. The driver had been making deliveries for hours, and wasn't sure when or where the truck was shot, Arizona Department of Public Safety spokesman Raul Garcia said.

Most of the vehicles hit since the gunfire began on Aug. 29 were traveling on Interstate 10, a main route through central and west Phoenix. No one has been seriously injured, but one bullet shattered a windshield, and broken glass cut a 13-year-old girl.

"Anytime that you have multiple shootings against American citizens on a highway, that's terrorism," Department of Public Safety Director Frank Milstead said. "It's just a matter of time before there is a tragedy."

Authorities also were studying a tractor-trailer rig at a location near I-10 and a car whose window was severely cracked Thursday, but those results weren't conclusive, Garcia said.

The shootings have rattled nerves and heightened fears among drivers that a possible serial shooter could hit them next. Electronic freeway billboards urge people to call a hotline with any tips. Some are commuting on city streets instead. □

New York:

\$15 minimum wage approved for fast-food workers

DEEPTI HAJELA

DAVID KLEPPER

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York state will gradually raise the minimum wage for fast-food workers to \$15 an hour — the first time any state has set the minimum that high.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's administration formally approved the increase Thursday, a move the Democratic governor announced at a labor rally with Vice President Joe Biden. Cuomo said he would work to pass legisla-

tion setting a \$15 minimum for all industries, a promise that comes as more and more cities around the country move toward a \$15 minimum wage.

"Every working man and woman in the state of New York deserves \$15 an hour," the governor told the enthusiastic crowd of union members. "We're not going to stop until we get it done."

Biden predicted the \$15 wage for fast-food workers would galvanize efforts across the country.

"You're going to make ev-

ery single governor in every single state in America look at themselves," he said at the rally in New York City. "It's going to have a profound impact."

He said he and President Barack Obama remain committed to raising the federal minimum wage to \$12 an hour.

The wage increase for fast-food workers in New York will be phased in over three years in New York City and over six years elsewhere in the state. It will apply to some 200,000 employees at large chain restaurants.

So far, Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco and the California cities of Oakland and Berkeley have approved phased-in increases that eventually will take their minimum wage to \$15 an hour, or about \$31,200 a year.

New York's increase was recommended by an unelected Wage Board created by Cuomo — a tactic that allowed the governor to circumvent the Legislature, where the Republican-led Senate has blocked big increases in recent years. □



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Jet engine parts on Las Vegas runway indicate major failure

**KEN RITTER
 SALLY HO
 Associated Press
 LAS VEGAS (AP)**

— Jet engine parts found on the Las Vegas runway where a British Airways flight aborted takeoff as the engine burst into flames indicate a rare catastrophic failure, experts said Thursday as investigators released preliminary findings and began analyzing flight data and cockpit recordings. Early findings show the failure occurred where the engine was under the highest pressure, though there was no immediate indication of what caused it or the fire that forced 170 people to evacuate Tuesday at McCarran International Airport as smoke poured from the aircraft.

"You really don't see catastrophic or uncontained engine failure like this very often," said John Cox, an aviation safety consultant who spent 23 years as a U.S. Airways pilot. He said the failure indicates parts sliced through the engine casing.

The National Transportation Safety Board said there was damage to the armored shell around the left engine's high-pressure compressor, and several 7- to 8-inch fragments of the compressor were found on the tarmac.

No one was seriously injured when British Airways Flight 2276 screeched to a halt and the 157 passengers and 13 crew members escaped down evacuation slides as firefighters doused flames spewing from the engine beneath the wing of the Boeing 777. The pilot who halted the takeoff and calmly called "mayday, mayday" said he will retire one flight shy of the day he had planned to hang up his wings next



A damaged British Airways Boeing 777-200 sits at McCarran International Airport Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2015, in Las Vegas. An engine caught fire before takeoff Tuesday forcing the evacuation of the crew and passengers.

(AP Photo/John Locher)

week.

Chris Henkey of Padworth, England, told NBC News he'd never had such a

close call in a 42-year career, and he's "finished flying." He won't captain what was to be his final

flight to Barbados, where he intended to vacation with his daughter.

Investigators planned to

interview Henkey and two senior first officers with 18 and 10 years of experience.

Henkey, 63, was hailed by fire officials and airline observers for a flawless reaction and evacuation, though he deflected praise, saying the entire crew helped. The whole ordeal lasted about five minutes.

Engine fires are unusual but not unheard-of.

In July, a Southwest Airlines flight evacuated at Midway International Airport in Chicago when one engine caught fire on takeoff.

In June 2006, an American Airlines jet engine exploded during testing at a maintenance area at Los Angeles International Airport, launching parts into the body of the plane and as far as half a mile away. No one was injured in either incident. □

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Migrants' long and winding road to Europe turns cold, muddy

SHAWN POGATCHNIK
Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Soaked to the bone and ankle deep in mud, thousands of people seeking refuge in Europe are finding that their path to a new life is growing harder by the hour.

Torrential rains poured as an unprecedented 7,000 trekkers crossed the Greek border into Macedonia on Thursday past rows of camouflage-jacketed police. Children stumbled into mud-filled potholes and had to be pulled back out, bawling, into their mothers' arms. People struggled to find anything — plastic sheets, garbage bags, even a beach umbrella — to shield themselves from an unrelenting deluge.

And yet nothing could dampen their hopes of reaching the heart of Europe, where asylum and border security systems are already in danger of being overwhelmed in the migration crisis.

"I'm not going to be afraid of anything," said Waseem Absi, a 30-year-old from Ariha in northern Syria, as he held a disassembled pup tent over his head and trudged up a muddy slope alongside four friends. He said he hopes to reunite with relatives in the Netherlands.

The sudden onset of autumn has taken tens of thousands by surprise all along the Balkans route from Greece to Hungary, the main gateway to Western Europe for more than



Migrants in plastic raincoats rest near a makeshift camp for asylum seekers in Roszke, southern Hungary, Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015.

(AP Photo/Darko Vojinovic)

160,000 asylum seekers already this year.

As recently as last week, those making the epic journey, much of it on foot, were baking in a region-wide heat wave and free to sleep under the stars. Now they're without shelter and struggling to keep campfires burning, highlighting the inadequate support provided by several European governments at each border crossing. Conditions also rapidly deteriorated on Hungary's southern border with Serbia, where an estimated 3,000 crossed at an approved rail site or illegally

by ducking under the razor-wire marking that frontier. Garbage-strewn fields turned to mud, trapping relief agency trucks whose wheels spun and flecked passing migrants with sodden earth.

With Hungary and other nations providing few facilities on their borders, travelers have poured into the few tents erected recently by relief workers trying to compensate for the lack of government support.

"The medical tent is full of people — people who aren't actually sick, by the way, but just want a warm place to sit down.

We can't get rid of them," said Gabor Gyurko, a volunteer for the Catholic charity Caritas, which is providing medical care at a police-supervised collection point. Medics gave first aid to several mothers and their children and covered them with thermal blankets.

Gyurko said he expected the volume of ill people to surge with the chilly, wet weather "especially among people living in such close quarters."

Continued on page 27



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Netherlands: aid worker released in Kabul

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The Dutch foreign minister says an aid worker kidnapped in June in Afghanistan has been released after 81 days and is in good health.

Foreign Minister Bert Koenders said Thursday night that Anja de Beer, who was

seized June 22 by armed men in Kabul, was "doing well under the circumstances" after her release and has spoken to her family from the Dutch Embassy. It remains unclear who kidnapped the experienced aid worker, and Koenders didn't comment on the cir-

cumstances of her release. Koenders told Dutch broadcaster NOS that the government had no direct contact with the kidnappers but was in close contact with Afghan authorities and the aid agency she worked for about De Beer. □



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Russian troops already in Syria, Israel defense chief says



In this 2012 photo, Syrian President Bashar Assad, left, shakes hands with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Damascus, Syria. Lavrov said Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015, that Russian aircraft flying into Syria have been delivering weapons along with humanitarian supplies.

(AP Photo/Pool)

J. FEDERMAN
V. ISACHENKOV
Associated Press

Russia has been sending military forces into Syria in recent days, Israel's defense chief announced Thursday, as Moscow hinted at broader action to bolster President Bashar Assad's embattled army following a string of battle-field losses.

The increased Russian activity in Syria reflects Moscow's deep concerns that its longtime ally is on the brink of collapse, as well as hopes by President Vladimir Putin that a common battle against Islamic State extremists can improve Russia's ties with the West, strained over Ukraine.

But the strategy could be risky — and unless Russia sends large numbers of troops, halting the territorial gains made by Islamic militants could prove tough.

Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon told reporters Thursday that the Russian buildup appears to be limited for the time being. He said military advisers, technicians and security guards have arrived in recent days, with the main

goal of setting up an air base near the coastal town of Latakia that could be used to stage strikes on Islamic State fighters.

"As far as we understand, at this stage we are talking about a limited force that includes advisers, a security team and preparations for operating planes and combat helicopters," Yaalon said. He called the move "significant."

The claim was the latest indication of a Russian military buildup in Syria that has raised U.S. and NATO concerns.

The United States and its allies see Assad as the cause of the Syrian crisis, which has claimed more than 250,000 lives in over four years of fighting, and Washington has warned Moscow against beefing up its presence.

In Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that Russia is airlifting weapons to Syria and that Russian servicemen are training its military how to use them. He would not provide numbers or any other specifics.

Asked about Russian planes flying to the airfield

near Latakia, Lavrov said they were carrying "military items in accordance with existing contracts and humanitarian aid." He said Russia isn't planning "any additional steps," but held the door open for broader action.

"If it's necessary, we will act in full conformity with the Russian legislation, international law and our obligations, exclusively on the

request and consent of the government of Syria and other countries of the region, if there is a talk about helping them fight terrorism," he said.

Russia has been a longtime backer of Syria, and it has supported Assad throughout the civil war by shielding him from U.N. sanctions and providing weapons. It also appears eager to send a broader message that

Moscow remains loyal to its allies and strongly resents forceful change of regimes through foreign interference.

Moscow also has other key interests at stake. Russia maintains a naval base at Tartus, just 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of Latakia. Earlier this week, the nearby province of Idlib fell to al-Qaida and other Islamic fighters. □

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Northern Ireland government shaken amid impasse

GREGORY KATZ
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The future of the Catholic-Protestant power-sharing government

and may ultimately be suspended, leading to a restoration of direct British rule from Westminster.

The crisis stems in large part

the involvement of the IRA in murder, the continued existence of IRA structures, and the arrests that followed has pushed devolu-

ments and that he will seek a solution.

The unlikely coalition of former enemies, formed in 2007 after earlier governments were suspended, has lasted for eight years, longer than many had expected.

But it hasn't functioned fully for the past year, with Catholic-based parties blocking budget plans because too many British-ordered welfare cuts were involved.

There had been four earlier suspensions of the Northern Ireland government since the 1998 peace agreement was reached after years of delicate negotiations that followed the IRA's declaration of a cease-fire. If direct rule from Britain is imposed again,

it would mark the first time since 2007 that decisions would be made in London, not Northern Ireland.

Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams called for more talks so that the government could continue to operate.

He spoke before Robinson stepped down, but after several parties including Sinn Fein had voted against Robinson's request that the government be suspended to give delicate negotiations a chance to bear fruit. Several prominent figures have been arrested as part of the murder investigation in recent days, including Sinn Fein regional chairman Bobby Storey. They remain in custody but have not been charged. □



Sinn Fein party leader Gerry Adams, right, and Martin McGuinness speak to the media at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast, Northern Ireland, Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015. A political crisis at Stormont has developed over the recent murder of Kevin McGuigan, the status of the IRA, and the viability of the Catholic-Protestant power-sharing government.

(AP Photo/Peter Morrison)

in Northern Ireland is hanging by a slender thread with First Minister Peter Robinson's decision Thursday to step down, along with all but one of his ministers, because of a series of disputes.

Democratic Unionist leader Robinson left one party figure, Arlene Foster, in place as temporary first minister and finance minister, but the coalition government has been seriously weakened by developments

from a police finding that that Irish Republic Army dissidents were involved in last month's killing of former IRA member Kevin McGuigan, a development that Robinson said raised serious doubts about the future of the coalition government that is a prime achievement of the 1998 peace agreement.

Robinson said "business as usual" is impossible because of "the assessment of the chief constable of

tion to the brink."

He said he was leaving Foster in place as a gatekeeper to prevent other parties from taking advantage of the situation in what may be the final days of the power-sharing government.

Robinson said crisis talks with the government will continue.

Downing Street officials said Prime Minister David Cameron is "gravely concerned" by the develop-

Syria:

Islamic State militants advance on key military base

SARAH EL DEEB
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Islamic State militants have launched a new push on a key military base in eastern Syria and seized a nearby missile facility, the group's media and activists reported Thursday.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights confirmed the capture of the facility and said intense clashes with government forces continued near the Deir el-Zour military base.

The Observatory, which relies on local activists, said at least 36 militants were killed in the clashes, including a child who was one of two suicide bombers who opened the way for the group's advance toward the missile facility. The group said the government responded with airstrikes.

The pro-IS Aamaq media outlet says the group captured the site of a rocket battalion overnight, about a mile (kilometer) away from the Deir el-Zour mili-

tary air base, after two suicide bombings that targeted soldiers guarding the area. Aamaq said dozens of soldiers were killed in the attack. The government, however, said it foiled an "infiltration attempt" by the group and inflicted heavy losses on them. The official news agency said IS fighters tried to sneak into the air base after detonating five explosives-packed vehicles at the eastern part of the facility.

IS, which controls much of

Deir el-Zour province, has been trying to take over the base since late last year. If captured, it would eliminate the last major government presence in the province.

Syria's government lost its last remaining army base in the northwestern Idlib province on Wednesday to al-Qaida's Syrian affiliate and allied insurgents.

Activist Hadi Abdullah, who has been in touch with the rebels, said 60 government soldiers were captured. □

In north, Lebanese slam government plan to dump trash

BEIRUT (AP) — Dozens of northern Lebanon residents rallied Thursday against government plans to deal with Beirut's mounting trash crisis by opening a new landfill in their region.

Those living near an old, closed landfill in the north also protested, rejecting government plans to temporarily reopen it to immediately get rid of hundreds of tons of trash that has piled in the streets of Beirut over the last seven weeks.

The pushback from residents and local officials outside Beirut is the latest in the near-daily protests against government inefficiency amid the trash crisis that have engulfed the Lebanese capital and further compounded anger against long-serving politicians who have dominated the country since the civil war ended in 1990.

Over the last month, the trash crisis ignited the largest Lebanese protests in years and emerged as a festering symbol of the government's paralysis and failure to provide basic services. It was sparked after authorities closed Beirut's main landfill on July 17 and failed to provide an alternative. Activists capitalized on the issue to move beyond just the trash, rallying support around government corruption and demanding officials be held accountable for years of corruption. They also called for parliamentary elections, which were last held in Lebanon in 2009. After an emergency session held late into Wednesday night as thousands of protesters rallied outside government offices in downtown Beirut, authorities announced they would start two new landfills, including one in the northern district of Akkar. They also said they will reopen the old landfill there for a week, to immediately get rid of tons of trash.

Lucien Bourjeili, an activist with the You Stink movement that started the Beirut street protests, said his group is studying the government proposal before deciding what to do next. □



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Man dies amid clashes as verdict nears for Venezuela leader



A woman is detained by national police during clashes between supporters of jailed opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez and government loyalists outside the courthouse in Caracas, Venezuela, Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015.

(AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

At midday, red-shirted government supporters showed up and began chanting that Lopez was a murderer and a terrorist. Some burned the orange flag of Lopez's Popular Will party and threw bottles at Lopez's wife, Lilian Tintori,, as she passed a barricade to enter the court.

Lines of police in riot gear separated the two sides, but were unable to prevent direct confrontations and shoving matches.

At least two women were hurt during the melee and one man, 66-year-old Popular Will member Horacio Blanco, died outside the courthouse. As the hearing got under way, Lopez supporters hailed Blanco as a martyr at a rally in an upscale Caracas neighbor-

hood. Popular Will issued a statement alleging that President Nicolas Maduro was personally responsible for Blanco's death, which it described as the result of a heart attack brought on by the morning's violence. The doctor who received Blanco's body said the cause of death was not immediately clear. Lopez, who could face more than 10 years in prison, denies encouraging government opponents to erect flaming street barricades and destroy public property during last year's protests. He says he only called for peaceful demonstrations. His supporters say pro-government forces were to blame for most of the clashes that broke out during the protests and left dozens dead. □

HANNAH DREIER
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A man died and several people were injured Thursday as supporters of jailed opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez clashed with government loyalists outside a Caracas courthouse in anticipation of an impending

verdict. Members of Lopez's party arrived in the morning to wave banners and pray, as they have dozens of times since Lopez was jailed 19 months ago on charges of inciting violence in his role as the leader of a sometimes bloody 2014 street protest movement.

Puerto Rico tutoring services agency charged in fraud case

DANICA COTO
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Officials with a U.S. company that provides tutoring services at public schools in Puerto Rico have been charged in a nearly \$1 million fraud case involving federal funds, authorities said Thursday. U.S. Attorney Rosa Emilia Rodriguez said 31 directors and program managers at Rocket Learning LLC in Puerto Rico face 74 counts including theft of government money and property.

She said the agency received \$34 million in federal funds from 2011 to 2013 for its Puerto Rico program and accused employees of submitting fake invoices to obtain more than \$954,000 of that amount for personal benefit. Rocket Learning officials did not respond to a request for comment. Authorities said the fraud occurred in part because officials bypassed a faulty biometric system and teachers would tell students to provide fake names. □

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Li says China to open currency market to central banks

BEIJING (AP) — China plans to allow foreign central banks into its interbank currency market, the country's No. 2 leader said Thursday, in a new move to expand use of the tightly controlled Chinese yuan. Speaking at a business conference, Premier Li Keqiang gave no time frame for the change or

details of what foreign institutions would be allowed to do. The move follows Beijing's decision in March to allow some foreign investors into the market in which its state-owned banks trade bonds. "In our next step, we will open the interbank foreign exchange market to non-mainland central bank-

type institutions," said Li at the World Economic Forum in the eastern city of Dalian. Beijing controls the yuan's exchange rate and limits movement of money into and out of China but has been encouraging use of its yuan abroad, mostly for trade. The central bank said its surprise Aug. 11 devaluation of the yuan,

which rattled global financial markets, was part of efforts to make the exchange rate more market-oriented. Wider use of the yuan would reduce costs for China's traders and encourage sales of Chinese goods abroad, economists say. The interbank foreign exchange market is used for setting the exchange rate

of the yuan, but buying and selling takes place in a separate market, according to Tan Yaling, director of the China Forex Investment Research Institute. Until now, participants were mostly Chinese banks and a handful of foreign entities, said Tan, a former Chinese central bank analyst. □

Bank of England indicates no hurry to raise key rates

PAN PYLAS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The Bank of England has kept its main interest rate unchanged at the record low of 0.5 percent and provided no indication that it's in a hurry to start raising borrowing rates, to the likely relief of homeowners and businesses.

In minutes accompanying Thursday's decision, the central bank said only one member of its nine-strong rate-setting panel voted for a quarter point increase in the benchmark rate. Like last month, Ian McCafferty was the only member of the Monetary Policy Committee, or MPC, to back an increase.

The decision and the makeup of the vote was the consensus view in the markets and the pound was left largely unmoved around \$1.5415.

The Bank of England is widely expected to join the Federal Reserve in raising interest rates sometime in the coming months given the relative strength of the British economy and a



Dark clouds move over London's financial district Canary Wharf in London. The Bank of England provided no indication Thursday that it's in a hurry to start raising borrowing rates, to the likely relief of homeowners and businesses.
(AP Photo/Frank Augstein)

steady decline in unemployment. However, the prospect of a rate hike this year appears to have diminished in the past few weeks following the turmoil in global financial markets and low inflation rates.

In its statement, the rate-setting panel said the turmoil stoked by uncertainty over the Chinese economy has "the potential to add to the global headwinds

to U.K. growth and inflation." These developments merit "close monitoring," it added. Still, it said these have to be "weighed against the prospects for a continued healthy domestic expansion" that it says is underpinned by rises in income, supportive credit conditions and high economic confidence.

Britain is one of the fastest-growing among the

world's top industrial countries, notching up a quarterly growth rate of 0.7 percent in the second quarter. The Bank of England's mandate is to meet a 2 percent annual inflation target in a way that helps to sustain growth and employment. At last count, inflation was just 0.1 percent in the year to July.

In the statement, the committee said there is a range of views among the nine

members about the outlook for inflation. McCafferty justified his vote for a rate rise by noting that costs for businesses are rising, which could lead to inflation overshooting the target in the medium term. In conclusion, the committee said that all members agree that, "given the likely persistence of the headwinds weighing on the economy, when Bank Rate does begin to rise, it is expected to do so more gradually and to a lower level than in recent cycles." It stressed that this guidance "is an expectation, not a promise" and that the actual interest rate path will depend on economic circumstances. "It is global conditions which are concerning policymakers and tipping the scales in favor of inaction," said Ben Brettell, senior economist at Hargreaves Lansdown. The Bank of England's main interest rate has not been changed since March, 2009. It's at its lowest level since the bank was created in 1694. □

Standard & Poor cuts Brazil's sovereign debt to 'junk' status

BRAD BROOKS
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — The Brazilian government's sovereign debt rating was cut Wednesday to "junk" status by one of the major credit agencies, ratcheting up pressure on President Dilma Rousseff to find a way out of an economic and political crisis. Standard & Poor's said in a note that Brazil's hard-fought investment grade

status that it held for seven years was gone and that its outlook on the country was negative, just as the nation enters recession and is expected to see an even worse 2016.

That means that it will be far more expensive for the Brazilian government to tap international credit markets and that much investor money, such as mutual funds that only plow money into investment-

grade nations, will automatically be yanked out of the country. S&P said that extreme political challenges for Rousseff "have continued to mount, weighing on the government's ability" to shore up its finances as promised.

The downgrade comes on the heels of Rousseff submitting a budget to Congress that already had a built-in deficit of about \$10

billion, meaning she tossed to legislators the burden of figuring out where to make cuts.

The downgrade, while widely expected, came earlier than many analysts forecast and arrives at a time of extreme volatility for the Brazilian economy, with inflation hovering around 10 percent and unemployment the highest it has been in decades. Additionally, Rousseff has

almost no political backing, with her approval rating in the single digits, the worst seen by any leader since the nation's return to democracy three decades ago.

S&P said that "the negative outlook reflects what we believe is a greater than one-in-three likelihood of a further downgrade due to a further deterioration of Brazil's fiscal position." □



University of Aruba Honors its Top Students of 2014-2015

ORANJESTAD - A total of seven prizes for in depth theses and six outstanding student awards. That was the tally of this week's ceremony at the University of Aruba, UA, during which the academic institution with the support of members of the business community recognized a number of students who stood out during the past academic year.

The Student Award Night took place in the aula of the UA, and was opened by Rector Glenn Thode.

Nominees for the student awards, Dahariana Evertsz, student at the UA and Carl Quant, an UA alumnus were the Masters of Ceremony and they welcomed Minister of Education Michelle Hooyboer Winklaar who also addressed the students, representatives of the businesses that annual support the award ceremony and faculties' staff all who gathered in the solemn, stained glass adorned former Chapel, now Aula of the UA.

The UA has four faculties, the Faculty of Law, (FDR)



Management (OGM) and Mathematics.

The celebratory program included musical introduction and intermezzos presented by the Gucci

partners of the business community who are the annuals sponsors of the event gave out the certificates as well a monetary reward to the graduates

number is seven, however one represents the outstanding thesis of SW&D of the previous academic year. Alumnus Emmeline Webb, whose day of dis-

cheline Bury of FDR; Vandanna Geerman of the SW&D at the FAS; Jill Matthew of the Mathematics program of the FAS; and Kimberley van Loon of the



Faculty of Financial Economic Studies (FEF), Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management Studies (FHTMS) and the Faculty of Arts (FAS) that runs three bachelor programs, namely Social Works and Development (SW&D); Organization, Governance and

Dancers (one of the dancers is UA alumnus Consuela Cameron). But the most compelling moments were definitely the minute presentation of the winning theses, as they gave the essence of the investigations students conducted. Representatives of the

whose investigations resulted in clear summations, therefore earning the recognition for having written the best theses. Every year, the UA along with its commercial partners selects the outstanding theses in the various programs. This year that

sertation coincided with that year's award ceremony and it was decided to recognize it the following year. That was the case this week. The 2014-2015 winning theses were written by Ogienny Sahron van der Linden of the FEF; Prociano Nurse of the FHTMS; Mi-

OGM program of the FAS. It was a moment of pride for the UA to welcome representatives of two of the sponsors of the event to hand over the certificates and prizes.

Continued on Page 14

Continued from Page 13

Maggy Hazel of the CATC accountancy and tax advisors firm CATC is an UA alumnus, just like L. de Cuba, representative of ENNIA Insurances.

The nominees of the institution of some 700 students, not only represent the best of their faculties but displayed leadership and human qualities in the interest of their fellow students, the university and community in general.

Winner of the Student Award for the FEF was Christopher Habibe who had an admirable academic performance and on top of it, outperformed many in extracurricular activities including his active membership in Kiwanis Circle K International and the Debate Club. He is also the current President of the University of Aruba Student Association. The other nominees were Ogienny Sahron van der Linden, Dianmary Almary and Nina Terletskaya.

Master of Ceremony of the evening Carl Quant was called forth to receive his Student Award for the FHTMS. According to the faculty, Quant showed leadership qualities from day one. He became Class President, attended faculty meeting, guided his class mates through full load of study work and motivated them when they lacked energy at the end of each semester. In addition Quant also joined the ranks of active Kiwanis Circle K International members, allowing him to organize among others,

Leadership Summits at the UA. The other nominee was Prociano Nurse.

Xiavier Semileer won the Student Award for the FDR, the oldest faculty at the UA. Other nominees were Jeannette Baars Richard-

son, Micheline Bury and Sayenne Kelly.

Winner of the Student Award for the SW&D program of the FAS was Keyla Rojas who has been part of the student board for the majority of her four years

at the UA. She represented her classmates and students in general by voicing their concerns regarding courses and school-related matters, organized activities to give back to the community, all while keep-

ing up with her academic work. The other nominees were Master of Ceremony for the night, Dahariana Evertsz, Vandanna Geerman, Emmeline Webb and Tizlyn Kolfin.

Winner of the Student Award for the Math program of the FAS was Kayleigh Pawironadi, who on top of helping other students, gave birth in March of this year, yet did not miss a beat and had the top scores in the finals. Jill Matthew, Laura Morales and Gustavo Lopez were the other nominees.

Jonathan Henriquez won the Student Award for the OGM program of the FAS. Henriquez according to the faculty is an excellent role model for other students. He gave up his job to dedicate himself completely to his studies, and his commitment paid off. Henriquez not only excelled with his grades, but also in his extracurricular activities, including the Debate Club, assisting the UA Summer School and by being a commendable team player. The other nominees were Kimberley van Loon, Nurianna Helder and Ghislaine Nicolas.

The event was closed off by Acting Rector and Dean of the FAS Luciano Milliard who honored the student organizations working to improve the general well being at the university and for the community, namely Kiwanis Circle K International and the University of Aruba Student Association, SUA. They were represented by Christopher Habibe and Joshua Arrindell, respectively. □



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EAGLE BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple whom are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, as Ambassadors of Goodwill, at the Aruba Beach Club.

The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-to-34 consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Bob and Mrs. Donna Zimmerman from Griffin, Georgia. Bob

and Donna are loyal members of the Aruba Beach Club, and they love Aruba for the climate, the beaches and the restaurants, and they always enjoy reuniting with their friends they have known for the last 30 years in Aruba. They always say that Aruba truly is One Happy Island and Aruba Beach Club is a wonderful Resort. The certificate was presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Kenia Brito representing the Aruba Beach Club. □



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PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority honored Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Barbara Jani as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba as a token of appreciation for visiting the island for more than 20 consecutive years.

Ms. Darline de Cuba representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, Visitors care Liaison bestowed the Goodwill Ambassador certificates to the honorees on behalf of the Government of Aruba. Ms. de Cuba thanked them

for choosing Aruba as their vacation destination and as their 'home-away-from-home' for so many years. Joseph and Barbara resident of Pennsylvania stated that the main reasons for returning to Aruba are the weather, the restau-

rants, the safety, and most of all the people. Barbara worked at American Airlines, and the couple has traveled all through the Caribbean, and Aruba is by far their favorite island. Mrs. Brenda James, Man-

ager on Duty at the Holiday Inn was present at the ceremony and handed out gifts to the honorees and also thanked them on behalf of the resort. Congratulations Joseph and Barbara for the 35 years Anniversary. □



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Serena Williams, of the United States, waves to fans after beating Madison Keys, of the United States, during the fourth round of the U.S. Open tennis tournament, Sunday, Sept. 6, 2015, in New York.

Associated Press

Serena Williams' Slam bid delayed; U.S. Open semi postponed

HOWARD FENDRICH

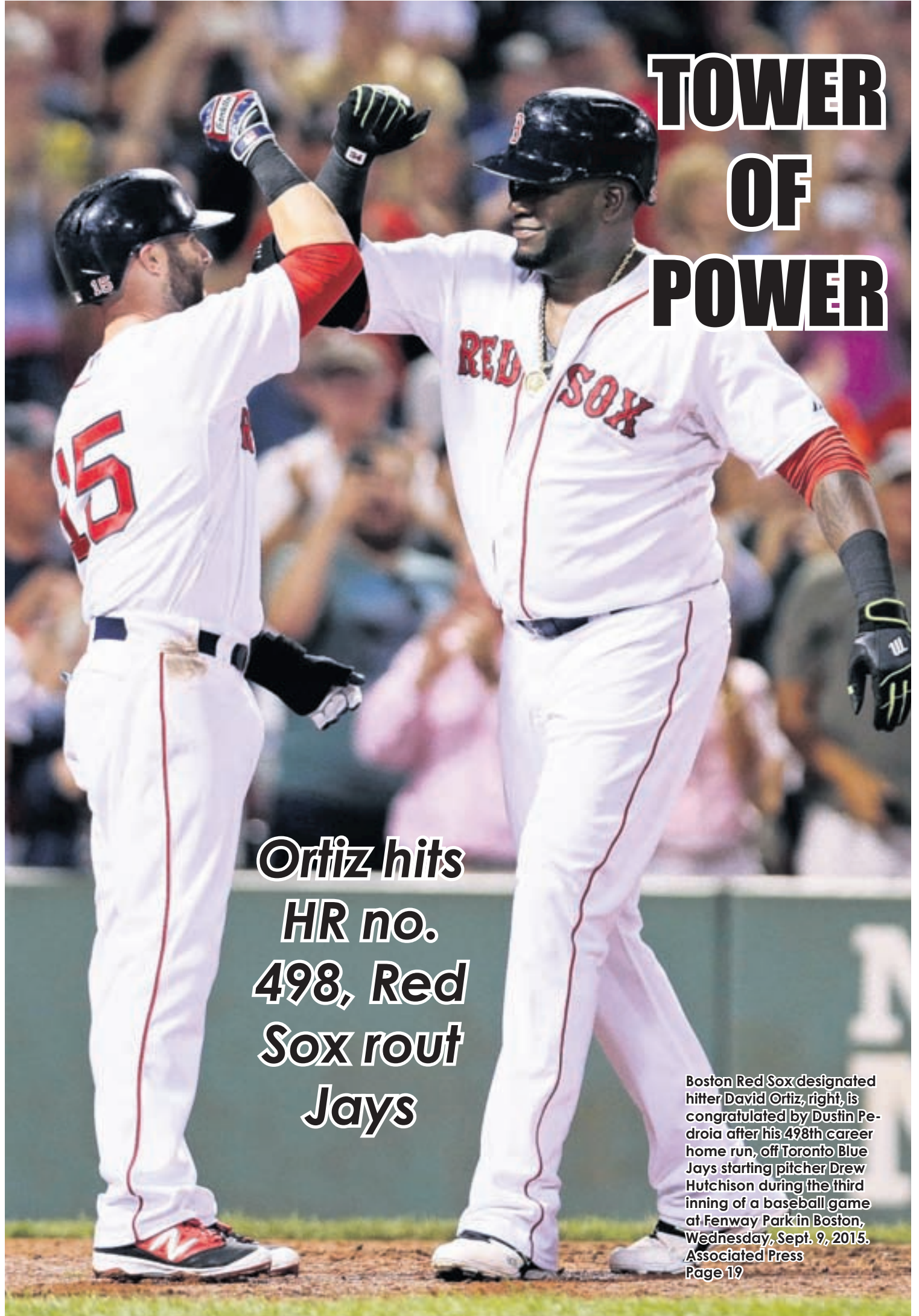
AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Serena Williams will have to wait before continuing her bid for a calendar-year Grand Slam: Her U.S. Open semi-final was postponed because of rain in the forecast.

The top-seeded Williams was supposed to face 43rd-ranked Roberta Vinci of Italy on Thursday night at Flushing Meadows, but nearly four hours before that match would have started, the U.S. Tennis Association — citing a prediction of "rain throughout the evening" — pushed back both women's semi-finals until Friday.

When the USTA announced the rescheduling, there were doubles and juniors matches in progress. But the rain did eventually arrive, wiping out play, a little more than an hour before Williams and Vinci were supposed to take the court. It was drizzling at 7 p.m., when that match would have started.

Continued on page 18



TOWER OF POWER

Ortiz hits HR no. 498, Red Sox rout Jays

Boston Red Sox designated hitter David Ortiz, right, is congratulated by Dustin Pedroia after his 498th career home run, off Toronto Blue Jays starting pitcher Drew Hutchison during the third inning of a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston, Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2015. Associated Press Page 19

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Roche wins 18th Vuelta stage, Dumoulin keeps lead over Aru

RIAZA, Spain (AP) — Nicolas Roche of Ireland won the hilly 18th stage of the Spanish Vuelta on Thursday, while Dutchman Tom Dumoulin protected his slim lead over Fabio Aru. Dumoulin responded to Aru's repeated attacks on the final ascent to keep his three-second advantage over the Italian with three days to go until the finish of the Grand Tour. "A second for every day," Dumoulin said. "It's very little time and a lot can happen in the coming days." Roche beat fellow escapee Haimar Zubeldia in a sprint to the finish line to complete the 204-kilometer (127-mile) ride from Roa to Riazza in just over five hours. "Zubeldia is a very strong and experienced rider, I



Astana's Team Fabio Aru, of Italy, speeds to cross the finish line at the end of the 145th stage between Comillas and Sotres Cabrales, 175.8 kilometers (109 miles), of the Spanish Vuelta cycling race that finish in Sotres Cabrales, northern Spain, Sunday, Sept. 6, 2015. Joaquin Rodriguez won the stage.

Associated Press

have lost many sprints to him," Roche said in Spanish. "I tried to go first and to control the speed, and it worked."

Roche, son of former cyclist Stephen Roche, had to be attended by medics for a wasp sting after the stage. "I was afraid of the bug!

Well, I am exaggerating, but I touched it and it stung me," Roche said. "I thought it would be bad luck!"

Dumoulin took the lead of the general classification by erasing a deficit of almost two minutes by winning Wednesday's individual time trial.

Back in the peloton on Thursday, Aru's Astana set a hard pace and succeeded in shedding Dumoulin of his Giant-Alpecin teammates. But Dumoulin stayed pegged to Aru's wheel on three separate attacks going up the final category-one ascent, while the rest of the top 10 riders in the general classification took turns trying their luck only to be reeled in.

Feeling fit, Dumoulin even saved a little spurt to then

turn Aru and company into chasers.

"It was a difficult day, but I am still in red," Dumoulin said. "(Aru) was strong, but I knew how to keep the red jersey. He spent some energy in those attacks, and when (Davi) Moreno went I followed his wheel, so I did the little counterattack."

The race appears to be down to a two-man contest with third-place Joaquim Rodriguez still 1 minute, 15 seconds behind, and fourth-place Rafal Majka 2 minutes, 22 seconds back.

Friday's stage is another rolling 185.5-kilometer (115-mile) route from Medina del Campo to Avila.

The race ends in Madrid on Sunday. □

U.S. OPEN

Continued from page 17

Williams is trying to become the first tennis player since Steffi Graf in 1988 to earn all four Grand Slam titles in a single season. She won the Australian Open in January, the French Open in June and Wimbledon in July.

Now the 33-year-old American has won her first five matches at the U.S. Open, and needs two more victories to add that championship to her 2015 collection. The other women's semifinal moved to Friday from Thursday is No. 2 Simona Halep of Romania against No. 26 Flavia Pennetta of Italy.



Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, returns a shot to Feliciano Lopez, of Spain, during the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open tennis tournament, Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015, in New York.

Associated Press

It created a high-profile and packed schedule for Friday, when the men's semifinals already were slotted. In those matches, No. 1 Novak Djokovic meets defending cham-

pion Marin Cilic, and No. 2 Roger Federer plays his Swiss Olympic and Davis Cup teammate, No. 5 Stan Wawrinka.

The U.S. Open has a long history of scheduling prob-

lems because of weather, including five consecutive men's finals postponed from Sunday to Monday from 2008-12.

As part of a broader, \$500 million-plus renovation plan for the tournament site, the U.S. Tennis Association has been constructing a retractable roof over the main court, Arthur Ashe Stadium, that is planned for next year's U.S. Open.

For now, a framework of more than 6,500 tons of steel sits atop that stadium, but the work to install the retractable panels will resume after this year's tournament ends.

Williams vs. Vinci was supposed to be the first women's semifinal Thursday night, followed by the other.

Now Halep-Pennetta will begin at 11 a.m. Friday, when the forecast is much more promising. After that, Williams will play Vinci, against whom she is 4-0.

Williams also has enjoyed plenty of success against the women she could meet in the final, should she beat Vinci: 6-1 against Halep, 7-0 against Pennetta.

The men's semifinals will be played afterward, beginning no sooner than 5 p.m., instead of the originally scheduled 3 p.m. First will be Djokovic-Cilic, then Federer-Wawrinka.

It all makes for a lineup similar to the U.S. Open's old Super Saturday schedule, when the men's semifinals and women's final were all played on the next-to-last day of the tournament. □

AL Capsules

Ortiz hits HR No. 498; BoSox crush Blue Jays 10-4

The Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — David Ortiz hit a three-run shot for his 498th home run as Boston beat AL East-leading Toronto to hand the Blue Jays just their second series loss since late July.

Joe Kelly (10-6) won his eighth consecutive start, the longest stretch by a Red Sox pitcher since Hall of Famer Pedro Martinez won nine straight in 1999.

Mookie Betts had a solo homer and drove in three runs, and Ryan Hanigan had three hits and three RBIs for the Red Sox, who have won nine of 13 after taking two of three from Toronto.

Despite the loss, the Blue Jays maintained a 1 1/2-game lead over New York, which lost to Baltimore. Toronto heads to Yankee Stadium for a four-game series that begins Thursday night. Ortiz connected off Drew Hutchison (13-4). It was his 32nd homer of the season the 59th of his career against the Blue Jays, most by any opponent.

ORIOLES 5, YANKEES 3

NEW YORK (AP) — CC Sabathia's strong start in his return from the disabled list was undone by Stephen Drew's fielding misplays at second base as Baltimore rallied past New York.

Steve Pearce hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning for the Orioles off Adam Warren (6-6).

Baltimore had lost 15 of 18 and faded from postseason contention before winning the final two in the three-game series.

Carlos Beltran homered and drove in three runs for the Yankees, who took a 3-1 lead in the third but got only one more hit.

Ubaldo Jimenez (11-9) allowed four hits in seven innings, struck out eight and walked none. Darren O'Day and Zach Britton finished the four-hitter, with Britton saving his 32nd game in 35 chances.

The crowd of 30,038 was the smallest at new Yankee Stadium, which opened in 2009, and the lowest for a Yankees home game since 2004.

RAYS 8, TIGERS 0



Boston Red Sox designated hitter David Ortiz watches his 498th career home run, off Toronto Blue Jays starting pitcher Drew Hutchison during the third inning of a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston, Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2015.

Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Jake Odorizzi pitched six strong innings as Tampa Bay hit four homers in a rout of Detroit.

Odorizzi (7-8) held the Tigers to six hits and a walk while striking out six. Logan Forsythe, Tim Beckham, J.P. Arencibia and Mikie Mah- took went deep for the Rays.

Kyle Lobstein (3-7) took the loss in his second start back from a shoulder injury. He gave up five runs and seven hits in 5 2-3 innings.

INDIANS 6, WHITE SOX 4

CHICAGO (AP) — Francisco Lindor had three hits, including a home run, and Jose Ramirez also went deep in Cleveland's victory over Chicago.

Josh Tomlin (5-1) allowed three runs in 5 2-3 innings to win his fifth straight. Cody Allen allowed a run in the ninth before securing his 30th save.

Lindor, who also tripled and scored twice, finished a double shy of the cycle.

Trayce Thompson, Tyler Saladino and Jose Abreu each had a solo homer for the White Sox. Jeff Samardzija (9-12) allowed four runs and eight hits in 6 2-3 innings. Samardzija has lost seven of eight overall and six straight at home.

ASTROS 11, ATHLETICS 5

OAKLAND, California (AP) — Collin McHugh earned his 16th win and Houston hit four home runs to beat Oakland, avoiding a series sweep. Colby Rasmus,

Evan Gattis, Carlos Gomez and Marwin Gonzalez hom-

ered for the Astros, who increased their AL West lead

over Texas to two games. They are tied with Toronto for the major league lead with 192 home runs.

McHugh (16-7) labored through his worst start in more than a month but got enough support to win his third straight. He allowed five runs and six hits in 5 1-3 innings.

Jose Altuve added two doubles and Hank Conger drove in four runs for the Astros. Houston's 76 wins are its most since 2010 when the club went 76-86.

Aaron Brooks (1-3) gave up five runs and eight hits in four-plus innings. Billy Butler and Josh Reddick homered for Oakland, which gave manager Bob Melvin a two-year contract extension before the game. □

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Cespedes, Mets rally past Nationals again for 3-game sweep

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Yoenis Cespedes hit a go-ahead homer in the eighth inning moments after pinch-hitter Kelly Johnson connected for a game-leveling shot as the New York Mets rallied past the Washington Nationals 5-3 Wednesday for a pivotal three-game sweep.

Jacob deGrom (13-7) pitched seven strong innings in a tight duel with Nationals starter Stephen Strasburg, who struck out a season-high 13.

Johnson's leadoff drive against Strasburg (8-7) tied it 2-all before Cespedes teed off for a two-run shot against struggling Drew Storen, sending the Mets to their third consecutive comeback victory in the series.

The sweep extended New York's lead in the NL East to seven games over Washington with 23 to play. The Mets have won six straight against the Nationals, including a three-game sweep at Citi Field from July 31 to Aug. 2.

Bryce Harper homered twice, doubled and scored three times for Washington, but it wasn't enough.

New York with an RBI single off Jonathan Papelbon in the ninth.

Travis d'Arnaud also homered for the Mets. Jeurys Familia closed for his 39th save.

CARDINALS 4, CUBS 3

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Matt Carpenter tripled and scored twice, and Stephen Piscotty doubled in the decisive run as St. Louis beat Chicago to end a three-game skid.

The NL Central leaders scored three times in the eighth inning to avoid their first sweep at home



New York Mets' Yoenis Cespedes hits a two-run home run during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Washington Nationals at Nationals Park, Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2015, in Washington. The Mets won 5-3.

this season and their first against the Cubs since September 2010.

Cubs starter Jon Lester left after seven dominant innings. He didn't allow a hit after the third batter and retired 20 of his final 21 hitters.

Jonathan Broxton (2-4) got the win and Trevor Rosenthal earned his 43rd save. Clayton Richard (3-1) took the loss.

PIRATES 5, REDS 4

CINCINNATI (AP) — Reds star Joey Votto went berserk after a called strike and got ejected, with teammates and even an umpire needing to hold him back in Cincinnati's loss to Pittsburgh.

Jung Ho Kang hit Pittsburgh's first grand slam of the season, a tiebreaking shot in the sixth inning. The Pirates hold the top spot in the NL wild-card race.

Votto was tossed by plate umpire Bill Welke while the

Reds were trying to rally in the eighth. The 2010 NL MVP slammed down his batting helmet, hollering and gesturing as he went nose-to-nose with Welke.

The dispute quickly escalated and Reds teammates intervened to restrain Votto, with first base umpire Laz Diaz helping prevent the big hitter from getting back at Welke. Cincinnati manager Bryan Price also was ejected.

J.A. Happ (5-1) struck out a season-high 10. He won his fifth straight start, pitching into the seventh inning and giving up three hits.

Mark Melancon worked the ninth for his major league-leading 44th save. Keyvius Sampson (2-4) took the loss.

BRAVES 8, PHILLIES 1

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Julio Teheran threw seven impressive innings and Christian Bethancourt hit a go-ahead homer as Atlanta

beat Philadelphia.

Teheran (10-7) gave up one run and four hits to help Atlanta take two of three and avoid tying the Phillies for the worst record in the majors. The Braves had lost 12 in a row and 19 of 20 before coming to Philadelphia.

Michael Bourn had four of Atlanta's season-high 18 hits. Bethancourt and Hector Olivera each had three hits. The trio entered the game batting a combined .170 (37 for 218).

David Buchanan (2-8) allowed four runs and 10 hits in 3 1-3 innings.

MARLINS 5, BREWERS 2

MIAMI (AP) — Tom Koehler tied career highs with 10 strikeouts in eight innings and Christian Yelich had a tiebreaking, two-run double in the seventh as Miami beat Milwaukee.

Koehler (9-13) won for the first time since July 23 at San Diego, ending a seven-game losing streak. He allowed two runs and four hits.

A.J. Ramos pitched the ninth for his 25th save in 31 chances.

Martin Prado drove in the other three runs for the Marlins.

Tyler Cravy (0-6) took the loss.

DIAMONDBACKS 2, GIANTS

1

PHOENIX (AP) — Zack Godley pitched six effective innings as Arizona intentionally loaded the bases to get out of a seventh-inning jam and beat San Francisco.

Godley (5-1) was sharp in his last start before heading to the bullpen, allowing a run and three hits.

Jarrod Saltalamacchia homered for the second straight game, a two-run shot off Chris Heston (11-10). Ender Inciarte had three hits.

The Diamondbacks took a bit of a gamble in the seventh, intentionally walking Buster Posey with runners at the corners to avoid facing the NL's third-leading hitter. Randall Delgado got Angel Pagan to pop out to end the inning.

Brad Ziegler retired the final five hitters for his 23rd straight save and 25th overall.

The Giants went 0 for 10 with runners in scoring position during their ninth loss in 12 road games.

PADRES 11, ROCKIES 4

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Matt Kemp and Jedd Gyorko homered, and James Shields pitched San Diego past Colorado.

The Padres had 18 hits in winning their second straight after a four-game skid.

San Diego scored four runs in the third to take a 6-2 lead. The big blow was Gyorko's three-run homer.

Shields (11-6) worked six innings and was charged with four runs. The right-hander improved to 5-0 against the Rockies in his last six starts against them. Chris Rusin (5-8) went three innings and allowed six runs on eight hits. He walked Shields with the bases loaded in the second.

Colorado has lost 17 of its past 21 at Petco Park.

In other NL games it was St. Louis 4, Chicago Cubs 3; Atlanta 8, Philadelphia 1; N.Y. Mets 5, Washington 3; Miami 5, Milwaukee 2; Pittsburgh 5, Cincinnati 4; San Diego 11, Colorado 4; Arizona 2, San Francisco 1; and L.A. Angels 3, L.A. Dodgers 2. □

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Floyd Mayweather, USADA dispute report of IV doping



Boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr. watches during a news conference, Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2015, in Las Vegas. Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Floyd Mayweather Jr. insists he did nothing wrong in taking an IV solution to rehydrate after the weigh-in for his fight against Manny Pacquiao. Doping officials on Thursday also backed Mayweather, saying he disclosed the infusion to them before taking it and that it contained no prohibited substances. A report Wednesday by SB Nation said representatives of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency saw that Mayweather had taken the IV when they went to collect urine samples from him after the weigh-in. The report said

the Mayweather did not receive a formal exemption from the USADA for the IV until three weeks after the fight. But the USADA said it was aware of the IV prior to it being taken and that the Nevada Athletic Commission and Pacquiao's representatives were notified. In a statement, the agency referred to what it called "numerous unfounded and false accusations" in the article, saying they were either a "genuine misunderstanding of the facts or an intentional desire to mislead." "It is simply absurd to sug-

gest that we would ever compromise our integrity for any sport or athlete," the statement said. The substances in the IV — a saline solution and vitamins — are not banned by the USADA. But the World Anti-Doping Agency does not allow the high volume that Mayweather took because it can mask other substances. "Although Mr. Mayweather's application was not approved until after his fight with Mr. Pacquiao and all tests results were reported, Mr. Mayweather did disclose the infusion to USADA

in advance of the IV being administered to him," USADA's statement read. It added that once the therapeutic use exemption was granted, the Nevada commission and Pacquiao were immediately notified even though the practice is not prohibited. Mayweather, who is fighting Andre Berto on Saturday, said he has always been a strong supporter of athletes being clean. His insistence

on having the USADA do random testing was one reason his fight with Pacquiao took place five years after it was originally proposed. "I did not commit any violations of the Nevada or USADA drug testing guidelines," Mayweather said in a statement. "I follow and have always followed the rules of Nevada and USADA, the gold standard of drug testing." □

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SEPTEMBER 10 - 16

NEW THIS WEEK!

SCORCH TRIALS
MAZE RUNNER
Dylan O'Brien | Kaya Scodelario
MON-THURS 3:45 | 6:35 | 9:25
FRI 3:45 | 6:35 | 9:25 | 12:05 PG-13
SAT 1:00 | 3:45 | 6:35 | 9:25 | 12:05
SUN & HOL 1:00 | 3:45 | 6:35 | 9:25

THE PERFECT GUY
Sanaa Lathan | Michael Ealy
MON-THURS 4:35 | 6:55 | 9:15
FRI 4:35 | 6:55 | 9:15 | 11:35
SAT 2:15 | 4:35 | 6:55 | 9:15 | 11:35
SUN & HOL 2:15 | 4:35 | 6:55 | 9:15

SCORCH TRIALS
MAZE RUNNER
Dylan O'Brien | Kaya Scodelario
MON-THURS 5:20 | 8:10 PG-13
FRI 5:20 | 8:10 | 10:55
SAT 2:30 | 5:20 | 8:10 | 10:55
SUN & HOL 2:30 | 5:20 | 8:10

THE VISIT
Olivia DeJonge | Ed Oxenbould
MON-THURS 5:15 | 7:25 | 9:35
FRI 5:15 | 7:25 | 9:35 | 11:45
SAT 3:05 | 5:15 | 7:25 | 9:35 | 11:45
SUN & HOL 3:05 | 5:15 | 7:25 | 9:35

ALSO SHOWING!

THE TRANSPORTER REFUELED
Adam Cooper | Bill Collage
MON-THURS 4:45 | 7:05 | 9:30
FRI 4:45 | 7:05 | 9:30 | 11:50
SAT 2:25 | 4:45 | 7:05 | 9:30 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 2:25 | 4:45 | 7:05 | 9:30

HITMAN AGENT 47
Rupert Friend | Hannah Ware
MON-THURS 5:00 | 7:20 | 9:40
FRI 5:00 | 7:20 | 9:40 | 12:00
SAT 2:40 | 5:00 | 7:20 | 9:40 | 12:00
SUN & HOL 2:40 | 5:00 | 7:20 | 9:40

STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON
O'Shea Jackson Jr. | Corey Hawkins
MON-THURS 5:50 | 8:50
FRI 5:50 | 8:50
SAT 2:50 | 5:50 | 8:50
SUN & HOL 2:50 | 5:50 | 8:50

RICKI AND THE FLASH
Mamie Gummer | Meryl Streep
MON-THURS 4:25 | 6:45 | 9:05
FRI 4:25 | 6:45 | 9:05 | 11:25
SAT 2:05 | 4:25 | 6:45 | 9:05 | 11:25
SUN & HOL 2:05 | 4:25 | 6:45 | 9:05

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Lexi Thompson, of USA, follows her ball after playing on the 15th hole during the first round of the Evian Championship women's golf tournament in Evian, eastern France, Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015. Associated Press

Thompson, Lee share lead at 66 in Evian Championship

SAMUEL PETREQUIN

AP Sports Writer

EVIAN-LES-BAINS, France

(AP) — Lexi Thompson played a four-hole stretch in 5 under and finished with a 5-under 66 on Thursday in the Evian Championship for a share of the lead with Mi Hyang Lee.

The 20-year-old Thompson began her run with a birdie on the par-4 12th, hit a 7-iron to 20 feet to set up an eagle on the par-5 13th, and added birdies on the par-3 14th and par-5 15th. She parred the final 12 holes in her bogey-free morning round in the major championship.

"It feels great to have a stretch of holes like that," Thompson said.

"But you just have to take one shot at a time and not get ahead of yourself because, I mean, shots can get away from you out here. If you hit it in the rough, the rough's pretty thick."

Thompson won the Kraft Nabisco last year for her first major title, and took the Meijer Classic in July for her fifth career title. She has three top-10 finishes in her last five starts, and will play

in the Solheim Cup matches next week in Germany against Europe.

"Obviously, Solheim Cup was my No. 1 goal to be on that team to represent my country, so I'm very happy to be going to Germany next week," Thompson said. "But you have to focus on this week being the last major here at the Evian Championship."

Lee, from South Korea, had seven birdies and two bogeys at the picturesque resort above Lake Geneva. Gerina Piller, Thompson's U.S. Solheim Cup teammate, was a stroke back along with South Korea's Eun-Hee Ji and Thailand's Pornanong Phatlum.

Piller had eight birdies and four bogeys.

"There are just some spots on this course you cannot get in," Piller said.

Karrie Webb had a 71, and top-ranked Inbee Park opened with a 72.

Webb is attempting to win her sixth different major championship, and Park is trying to join Webb with a record five. Park has two major victories this year — the KPMG Women's PGA Championship and Ricoh

Women's British Open — and four overall titles. Webb and Park won the event before it became a major, Webb in 2006 and Park in 2012.

Second-ranked Lydia Ko, playing alongside Park and No. 3 Stacy Lewis, had a 69. The New Zealander was impressed with Thompson's round.

"I saw her score. I kind of realized it was going pretty low, especially at the start of the round and she was only a couple of groups in front of us," Ko said.

"I was on the par-3 14th or something, and that was only her fifth hole of the day. And I saw her to my left, and it showed her scorecard. I saw some birdies, some eagles, so that's a pretty consistent scorecard there."

Lewis shot a 73.

Defending champion South Korea's Hyo Joo Kim also had a 73. Last year, she opened with a major-record 61 and went on to beat Webb by a stroke.

Michelle Wie shot a 75. Sporting multicolored hair and high-top pink shoes, she's fighting a slow-healing left ankle injury. □

WNBA Roundup



New York Liberty's Tina Charles slaps hands with a teammate after a steal and a basket against the Connecticut Sun in a basketball game, Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2015, at Madison Square Garden in New York. Associated Press

Liberty secure top overall playoff seed for 1st time in WNBA

NEW YORK (AP) — Epiphanny Prince had 25 points, seven rebounds and five assists as New York Liberty beat Connecticut Sun 74-64 on Wednesday to secure the top overall seed in the WNBA playoffs for the first time.

New York improved to 23 wins from 32 games, also a team record for wins.

The Liberty held a 49-32 lead midway through the third quarter, but only made four free throws over the next 5 minutes. Connecticut closed in with a 9-0 run, capped by Chel-

sea Gray's 3-pointer, to pull to 53-48. But New York extended its lead to 65-54 with 5:28 remaining on Tanisha Wright's layup.

Tina Charles added 16 points and 13 rebounds for New York, moving past Tammy Sutton-Brown into 17th place on the WNBA's career rebounding list with 2,011. Kelsey Bone scored 19 points for Connecticut, which was swept in the season series for the first time since 1999.

In the other game Wednesday, Atlanta beat Los Angeles 90-60. □

MLS Roundup

Rivero, Techera score, Whitecaps beat Rapids 2-0

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Octavio Rivero and Cristian Techera scored 4 minutes apart in the second half as the Vancouver Whitecaps beat the Colorado Rapids 2-0 on Wednesday to take the sole lead in Major League Soccer.

Rivero scored in the 73rd minute, heading home his 10th goal of the season when he headed home a lofted Techera pass. Rivero tore off his jersey in celebration — a reaction that

earned him a yellow card — before being mobbed by teammates.

Techera fired a shot past a helpless Clint Irwin in the 77th. With the win, Vancouver is now two points ahead of the Los Angeles Galaxy in the MLS standings.

In Wednesday's other game, Sporting Kansas City drew the Portland Timbers 0-0 after Sporting goalkeeper Tim Melia managed to fend off a flurry of shots. □

Google debuts mobile-pay service in 2nd try

ANICK JESDANUN

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Google's answer to the Apple Pay mobile-payment service is debuting in the U.S., marking a do-over by the company behind the world's most-used operating system for smartphones. Android Pay will be similar to Apple Pay, except it works on Android phones rather than Apple's iPhones. On some Samsung Android phones, it will sit alongside Samsung Pay. All three services let people buy goods at retail stores by tapping their phones against the store's payment terminal. The user's debit or credit card on file then gets charged.

Google Wallet, the company's first attempt in mobile payments, flopped because it didn't have a big enough network of compatible devices and wireless carriers willing to work with it. Softcard, a rival effort by Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile, also got little traction. Google Inc. bought much of Softcard's technology and is combining the two to form Android Pay.

The timing is also better

for Android Pay. Apple Pay has raised awareness about mobile payments and more merchants now have equipment capable of accepting the payments.

Android Pay will start rolling out in the U.S. on Thursday, though it might take up to a week for some users to get it from the Android app store.

The app will come installed on new, compatible phones from AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon — the Softcard partners.

Samsung Pay has been available in South Korea since Aug. 20. A U.S. trial began Aug. 25, with a broader debut planned for Sept. 28. Apple Pay launched in the U.S. last October and expanded to the U.K. this summer.

Here's a closer look at these payment systems.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OVER PLASTIC?

Although taking out plastic isn't difficult, using the phone is more convenient if you already have it out — say, to check Facebook while waiting in line. It's also great in cabs: When you pull out your wallet late at



In this Jan. 17, 2012 file photo, a person tries a smartphone loaded with Google Wallet at the National Retail Federation in New York.

Associated Press

night, your keys might accidentally slip out.

The bigger advantage is security. With all three services, you're assigned a substitute card number unique to the phone. The store gets this number, so if its system gets hacked, your main card number isn't compromised. To work, the substitute num-

ber must be paired with a one-time code generated by that device. Hackers getting that number will also need physical possession of your phone.

WHAT ARE THE DISADVANTAGES?

There's a chance it won't work when you try to pay. Many merchants don't have the newer payment terminals that Apple Pay and Android Pay require. Samsung Pay has a backup mechanism. When the phone is tapped, it can mimic the old-school, magnetic signals produced by card swipes. That means it should work with most existing equipment — but not everywhere. For instance, you're not likely to give the waiter your phone — let alone your passcode — to pay the check at a restaurant.

HOW DO YOU MAKE A PAYMENT?

For Android Pay, you need to turn on the screen and unlock your phone, such as with your fingerprint or passcode. Then you tap the phone next to the payment terminal. Apple Pay is similar, except it works even with the screen off. When the phone detects the payment terminal, it lights up and asks for your

fingerprint.

With Samsung Pay, you need to swipe up from the bottom first. That's because the phone has no way of detecting when it's near a traditional, magnetic terminal. You can swipe up from the lock screen or the home screen, or if the screen is off (but the phone is on). If you're in an app such as Facebook, you need to get to the home screen first.

Apple Pay and Android Pay will work when you're in any app. There's no need to swipe first or launch any payment app.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Android Pay requires an Android phone that has a near-field communication, or NFC, chip (most do) and at least the KitKat version of Android, which came out in 2013. Samsung Pay works only with the Galaxy S6, S6 Edge and S6 Edge Plus and the Note 5, along with the upcoming Gear S2 smartwatch. For Apple Pay, you need an iPhone 6 or 6s, the Plus versions or an Apple Watch.

The latest iPad models support in-app payments, but not those at stores.

Your card also needs to be from a bank that has signed on. The list varies by service and is growing. □

Serena Williams' Slam bid delayed; U.S. Open semi postponed

HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) —

Serena Williams will have to wait before continuing her bid for a calendar-year Grand Slam: Her U.S. Open semi-final was postponed because of rain in the forecast.

The top-seeded Williams was supposed to face 43rd-ranked Roberta Vinci of Italy on Thursday night at Flushing Meadows, but nearly four hours before that match would have started, the U.S. Tennis Association — citing a prediction of "rain throughout the evening" — pushed back both women's semifinals until Friday.

When the USTA announced the rescheduling, there were doubles and juniors

matches in progress. But the rain did eventually arrive, wiping out play,

a little more than an hour before Williams and Vinci were supposed to take the court.

It was drizzling at 7 p.m., when that match would have started.

Williams is trying to become the first tennis player since Steffi Graf in 1988 to earn all four Grand Slam titles in a single season. She won the Australian Open in January,

the French Open in June and Wimbledon in July.

Now the 33-year-old American has won her first five matches at the U.S. Open, and needs two more victories to add that championship to her 2015 collection. The other women's semifi-



A Pokemon display hangs above Toy Fair 2014 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center Sunday, Feb. 16, 2014, in New York.

Associated Press

nal moved to Friday from Thursday is No. 2 Simona Halep of Romania against No. 26 Flavia Pennetta of Italy. □

Wall Street ends higher; investors parse Fed's moves

BERNARD CONDON

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Stocks in the U.S. bucked a global market slump Thursday as investors look ahead to a crucial Federal Reserve meeting next week on interest rates.

Investors pushed major U.S. indexes lower in the morning following drops in Asia and Europe, then reversed course as oil prices rose. That helped send shares of energy companies, which have been battered in recent weeks, higher.

Traders remain focused on a two-day meeting of Federal Reserve policymakers next week. They are trying to anticipate when and how quickly the central bank will begin to raise interest rates from their historically low levels. Those low rates have been a key factor sending stock prices higher over the past seven years.

A report Thursday showing a decline in applications for unemployment claims was the latest bullish sign on the job market, which could prompt the Fed to tighten credit. Some say worries about higher rates are overblown.

"The U.S. economy is in significantly better shape than in the past," said Mike Ryan, chief investment strategist at UBS Wealth Management Americas. "We're not dependent on Fed largess and stimulus to support growth."

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 76.83 points, or 0.5 percent, to close at 16,330.40. The Standard & Poor's 500 index gained 10.25 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,952.29. The Nasdaq composite climbed 39.72

points, or 0.8 percent, to 4,796.25.

Global markets have been moving sharply up and down in recent weeks as investors worry about a slowdown in China, plunging currencies in developing

percent overall, the biggest gain among the 10 industry sectors of the S&P 500.

The price of oil rose sharply after the Energy Department reported a strong increase in U.S. gasoline demand.

mean the Fed raising rates sooner, and faster, than anticipated.

"The Fed has to be mindful of all this job creation because, sooner or later, companies are going to have to compete for work-



Trader Dermott Clancy, center, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Stocks in the U.S. bucked a global market slump Thursday as investors look ahead to a crucial Federal Reserve meeting next week on interest rates.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

countries like Malaysia and uncertainty over the Fed's next move. In five of the six previous days of trading in September, the S&P 500 has made big moves both up and down, including a surge of 2.5 percent on Tuesday and a plunge of 3 percent on the first day of the month.

Trading was relatively light on Thursday, with little news moving prices one way or the other.

Apple jumped \$2.42, or 2.2 percent, to \$112.57, on Thursday, a day after the company introduced updated versions of the iPhone, Apple TV and iPad. Technology stocks rose 1

A report on unemployment claims early Thursday showed fewer Americans applied for benefits last week, adding to recent evidence of robust hiring. The Labor Department said weekly applications benefits dropped 6,000 to 275,000.

A separate government report the day before said U.S. job openings jumped to the highest level in 15 years in July. A report last week showed the U.S. unemployment rate fell to a seven-year low of 5.1 percent in August.

Investors are not so sure they like the healthier economy because it could

ers, and they're going to compete by raising wages," said David Joy, chief market strategist at Ameriprise Financial. "That will filter into the Fed's deliberations next week."

In Asia, Japan's Nikkei 225 slumped 2.5 percent after surging 7.7 percent on Wednesday in its biggest gain since October 2008. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index dropped 2.6 percent and China's Shanghai Composite Index finished 1.4 percent lower.

European markets were mostly lower. France's CAC-40 lost 1.5 percent. Among U.S. stocks making big moves: □

GE says will sell transportation finance to BMO

FAIRFIELD, Conn. (AP) —

General Electric said Thursday it will sell its transportation financing unit as it continues to pare down its lending division to focus on its industrial businesses.

BMO Financial Group will buy the GE Capital division, which provides financing to equipment makers, dealers and users of medium- and heavy-duty commercial trucks and trailers.

The companies did not disclose exact terms of the deal, but GE said it will add \$700 million to a fund it wants to use to buy back stock. GE said it expects to complete the sale in December.

General Electric has been making a push to focus on industrial businesses — making large, complicated equipment for other companies — and shrinking its other businesses. The company said in April that it will sell most of GE Capital's assets and also said it would sell \$26.5 billion in real estate assets. In August GE said it would sell its health care lending unit and related loans to Capital One for \$9 billion.

GE has also sold its insurance business and NBC Universal in recent years. Last year it agreed to sell its appliance business to Electrolux, although the U.S. government is trying to stop that deal.

The company said Thursday that it expects to announce deals for most of GE Capital's U.S. business by the end of 2015.

Earlier Thursday, GE said it may sell its GE Asset Management division to an investment management firm with experience managing retirement plan assets. The business managed \$115 billion in assets as of June 30.

The Fairfield, Connecticut-based company said there won't be any change to pension benefits received by GE pension plan participants as a result of any deal.

General Electric Co. shares rose 13 cents to close at \$24.68 Thursday. □

United Technologies announces reorganization

FARMINGTON, Conn. (AP)

— United Technologies Corp. officials have announced a reorganization that includes running the subsidiaries Otis Elevator and United Technologies Climate, Controls & Security as stand-alone businesses with new presidents.

The Farmington, Connect-

icut-based aerospace and building systems conglomerate said the moves announced Thursday will sharpen the subsidiaries' focus by creating stronger lines of authority and accountability.

The reorganization comes after sales at Otis fell 7.5 percent in the first six months of

the year versus a year ago amid an economic slowdown in China.

Two United Technologies executives will lead the two companies, which had operated under United Technologies Building & Industrial Systems.

Philippe Delpech will be president of Otis and Rob-

ert McDonough will become president of United Technologies Climate, Controls & Security, which includes Carrier and other brands.

United Technologies shares slipped 45 cents to close at \$91.40 Thursday. Its shares have fallen almost 16 percent over the past year. □

Mondelez plans to concentrate more on healthy snacks

NEW YORK (AP) — Mondelez, the company behind the Oreo and Cadbury brands, says that it plans to have 50 percent of its portfolio contain healthy snacks within the next five years. Healthy snacks currently comprise more than a third of its total revenue, according to Executive Vice President and Chief Growth Of-

ficer Mark Clouse.

Major food companies, such as Kellogg, General Mills and others, are shifting from foods that are perceived by some consumers as too processed to options that are considered healthier.

Clouse said Thursday that Mondelez International Inc. is looking to simplify ingredients and nutritional infor-

mation for its products as it develops new goods to meet consumer demand for healthier items. The executive said that the company expects to focus 70 percent of new product development efforts on healthy goods over the next five years.

Mondelez maintained its forecast for 2015 organic net revenue to climb at

least 3 percent.

The company, which also makes products like Ritz crackers and Trident gum, has been slashing costs to offset weak growth. Cost-cutting has become common for major packaged food companies, which are up against volatile economic conditions overseas and shifting tastes that favor foods marketed as

fresher or more natural.

Mondelez said Thursday that it would reinvest some of its cost savings into additional advertising and consumer support.

Mondelez split from Kraft Foods in late 2012, a move that was intended to allow each company to work with a more focused portfolio of brands. □

China auto sales shrink again in August for third month



A worker checks on the newly imported Renault vehicles parked at a seaport in Qingdao in east China's Shandong province. China's auto sales declined in August for a third month but some brands reported gains following a market downturn that shook the global industry.

(Chinatopix via AP)

JOE McDONALD
AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — China's auto sales declined in August for a third month but some brands reported gains following a market downturn that shook the global industry.

Sales of sedans, SUVs and

minivans fell 3.4 percent from a year earlier to 1.4 million vehicles, according to an industry group, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers. That dragged down the growth rate for the first eight months of the year to 2.6 percent following de-

clines of 6.6 percent in July and 3.4 percent in June.

China's auto market has been cooling since growth peaked at 45 percent in 2009 but this year's plunge prompted analysts to cut growth forecasts and General Motors Co. and Volkswagen AG to reduce pric-

es.

The deceleration is especially wrenching for global brands that are looking to China, the biggest global auto market by number of vehicles sold, to drive future revenue. With the Chinese economy cooling, buyers are putting off purchases, said analyst Xu Qian of Alix-Partners, a research firm. He said automakers will be lucky if the market achieves single-digit growth this year. "If the overall economy keeps struggling, we might not even see growth but a decline," said Xu.

Sales also have been dented by measures imposed by Beijing, Shanghai and other major cities to curb smog and congestion by limiting new vehicle registrations.

Total vehicle sales, including trucks and buses, declined 3 percent from a year earlier to 1.7 million, according to CAAM.

Sales of SUVs, a bright spot for the industry, soared 45.6 percent to 453,000, the group said. Meanwhile, sales of more traditional sedans slumped 16.4 percent

to 762,000 vehicles.

Despite the slowdown, automakers are pushing ahead with multibillion-dollar plans to expand production and create models to suit Chinese tastes, adding to competition in a crowded market.

In July, GM announced a \$5 billion plan to create vehicles with its main Chinese partner to be sold in China, Brazil, India and Mexico. That came after Ford Motor Co. and a local partner in April committed to spend \$1.1 billion on an additional factory in China.

Companies were preparing for slower growth, but the squeeze hit faster than many expected.

In a report last week, research firm Bernstein said China's downturn is so severe that German automakers, heavily reliant on this market, are likely to issue profit warnings in coming weeks.

Analysts had expected growth of 7 to 8 percent this year in Chinese auto sales but after June's contraction, some cut their outlook to as little as 1.7 percent. □

2 states' regulators oppose Patriot Coal reorganization plan

PAM RAMSEY
Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Ohio and Pennsylvania regulators say Patriot Coal's reorganization plan does not adequately address the company's obligations to clean up mine pollution. Both states filed separate motions opposing the plan's approval this week in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Richmond, Virginia.

A motion filed by the Ohio

Department of Natural Resources said the plan would leave Patriot Coal with little to no ability to address environmental problems and to perform required land reclamation following operations at the Sunnyhill Mine Complex. "New violations will occur, but the Debtors will not have the resources or equipment to repair any problems that may occur under the Ohio Permit. These violations, which can

incur penalties, are not provided for in the Plan," the motion says. Another motion filed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection said the reorganization plan does not provide for how Patriot Coal affiliate Eastern Associated Coal will meet its environmental obligations for the Colver and Delmont mines, which no longer operate. Drainage from both mines must be treated to

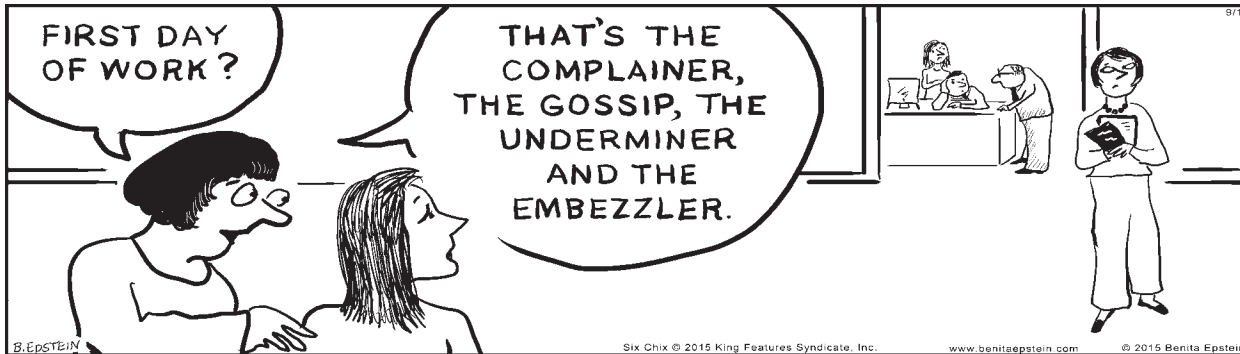
remove iron, aluminum, manganese and other pollutants. West Virginia regulators have voiced similar concerns about the reorganization plan. In an August filing, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection said the plan would leave the company with no assets to cover hundreds of millions of dollars in mine pollution cleanup. Ohio and Pennsylvania regulators also ob-

jected to the plan's release provisions. The Ohio agency said releasing current and former officers, directors, employees and others connected with the company from any claims violates bankruptcy law. The Pennsylvania department said the provisions are so broad that they could be read to release the Virginia Conservation Legacy Fund and any liquidating trustees from their obligations. □

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	1	3	4				7	
9					2			8
2				3				
1							3	
		5				4		
	7							6
				5				2
3			2					1
	6				7	8	5	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

9/11

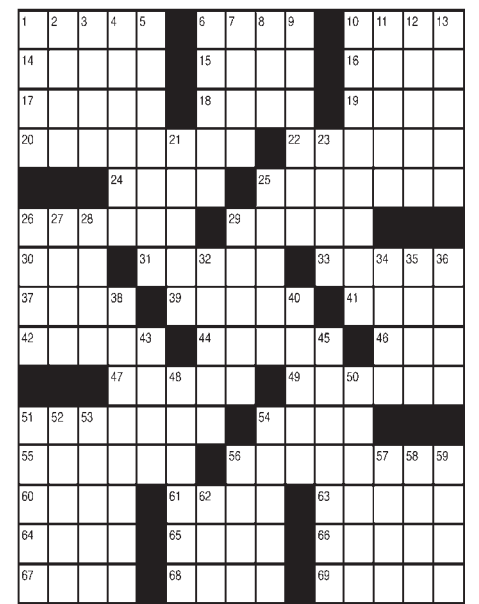
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

7	2	3	6	9	4	1	8	5
1	9	8	3	5	2	4	6	7
5	6	4	1	8	7	2	3	9
6	1	2	4	7	9	3	5	8
4	7	9	8	3	5	6	1	2
3	8	5	2	1	6	9	7	4
8	5	6	9	2	3	7	4	1
9	4	7	5	6	1	8	2	3
2	3	1	7	4	8	5	9	6

ACROSS

- 1 Donkeys
- 6 Close angrily
- 10 The _; London's metro
- 14 Intertwine
- 15 Cracker spread
- 16 As wise _ owl
- 17 Bona fide
- 18 Made fun of
- 19 Student's end-of-term ordeal
- 20 Ghosts
- 22 Clever
- 24 Boatbuilder's wood, often
- 25 Pullman car
- 26 Rubber end of a pencil
- 29 Early _; one who sees the sun come up
- 30 Corn on the _
- 31 Brown ermine
- 33 Chairs & stools
- 37 _-dozen; six
- 39 Abhors
- 41 Twofold
- 42 _ these days; eventually
- 44 Dangers
- 46 Enjoy a snow sport
- 47 Cowboys' event
- 49 Part of the foot
- 51 Said
- 54 Fail to include
- 55 Prepared
- 56 Hold back
- 60 Former Olympic sport
- 61 Check _; look at now & then
- 63 Fairy; sprite
- 64 Arden & others
- 65 Gator's cousin
- 66 Happening
- 67 Take a breather
- 68 _-deaf; like one with no ear for music
- 69 Classroom furniture
- DOWN**
- 1 Pointed tools
- 2 Ooze out
- 3 Wise man
- 4 Kicks out
- 5 Small sofas
- 6 _ plug; engine starter
- 7 Take _; run around a track
- 8 Dined
- 9 Military awards, often
- 10 Shabby
- 11 Spend all of
- 12 Keep a cooking turkey moist
- 13 Become a member of
- 21 Our planet
- 23 Notices
- 25 Internet destinations
- 26 Canyon sound
- 27 Reddish animal
- 28 _-bodied; strong & hale
- 29 Numerical comparison
- 32 Rowed
- 34 Smallest continent: abbr.
- 35 _ back; recant
- 36 Undergarment
- 38 Paramount
- 40 Pinch pennies
- 43 Golf course cry
- 45 Made tiny cuts
- 48 Subtract
- 50 Try hard
- 51 Higher berth
- 52 Treasure _; rich stockpile
- 53 Flooring pieces
- 54 1/8 of a cup
- 56 In just a bit
- 57 Alimony recipients
- 58 Basin
- 59 _ up;
- 62 Expert



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

9/11/15

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

GALE	ASWAN	SCOT
AXEL	LEASE	OHIO
SEAS	GLISTENING	
PDF	COLT	JACKS
	HOURS	VET
BRONTE	RECAPS	
RUPEE	COUNT	AWL
ALPS	SOWED	PREY
GEE	POPE	PALER
DREARY	RECIPE	
RYE	PARKA	
AGREE	HONK	MLK
PROCEEDING	BEAN	
EAST	LANCE	ONTO
DYES	METER	STEW

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9/11/15

Migrants

Continued from page 8

International aid workers said Hungary has failed to provide sufficient shelter at migrant bottlenecks on the border, particularly near the village of Roszke. The country instead is investing in a new security regime, supposed to begin Sept. 15, designed to close its border with Serbia backed by more than 3,000 troops, many of whom conducted drills Thursday in cooperation with Serbian colleagues.

"The situation here is really a big disaster because a lot of refugees are coming every hour from the border from Serbia to Hungary, to Roszke, and we don't have real infrastructure here," said Kathrin Niedermoser, whose Austrian charity for asylum seekers provided what food it could keep from getting wet. "We have small tents, now it's raining, and all the things are getting wet."

She said Hungary should deploy "big tents where people can come, sleep

and have a rest. We don't even have electricity, which means we don't have warm water during the whole day."

Conditions improved farther north on the route. Austrian police said more than 6,000 crossed Thursday from Hungary, chiefly near the town of Nickelsdorf, where authorities struggled to find enough buses, trains and emergency shelter. Most went to nearby towns, but more than 1,000 stayed in huge halls filled with beds near the border.

Earlier, Austria's rail company suddenly canceled all of its cross-border service with Hungary, citing what it called "a massive overload."

That raised tensions at Budapest's main Keleti station, where dozens of daily trains were scheduled to reach the Austrian capital, Vienna. Several hundred people from the Middle East, Asia and Africa waited up to 10 hours with tickets in hand as police penned them into one area. □

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30	311	\$5,000
23	343	\$4,500
27	103	\$4,000
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A squeeze down a narrow crack, and then an amazing discovery

LYNSEY CHUTEL
Associated Press

MAGALIESBURG, South Africa (AP) — Jagged

rocks hooked into Steven Tucker's overalls as he squeezed through a crack deep in a subterranean cave. Upon emerging at the other end, he saw he was in a chamber dripping with stalactites. Then his headlamp shone onto a bone. Then more bones, and half of a skull.

It was the night of Sept. 13, 2013, and Tucker and his caving partner had just discovered the remains of what scientists would later determine to be a new member of the human family tree. The announcement of the discovery was made by scientists on Thursday, with Tucker looking on.

Tucker was only trying to get out of fellow caver Rick Hunter's way, inching to the side, on a different intended route when he stepped into the crack in the network of caves known as Rising Star. He'd heard of the crack before, but despite having been down this cave more than 20 times before, he had never noticed it, nor known of any other caver who had ventured down it.

He shone his headlamp down the dark crevice, and couldn't see where it ended. He knew of at least one other caver who also stared down the crack, and decided it was too dangerous. He began to lower himself, feet-first, into the narrow vertical opening.

"It's exciting to find something new," Tucker, now 27, told The Associated Press on Thursday, trying to explain why he took the risk.

Tucker, just wiry enough



South Africa Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, left, shakes hand whilst introduced to Steven Tucker, right, by Lee Berger, a professor at the University of the Witwatersrand, center, at the Maropeng Cradle of Humankind in Magaliesburg, South Africa, Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015.

Associated Press

to fit, followed the crack deeper into the earth for nearly 13 yards (12 meters). "It's 18 centimeters (7.1 inches) wide, with these jagged rocks, sticking into you from all sides. And suddenly at the bottom,

it opens up into a large chamber with really stunning stalactites hanging from the ceiling," Tucker said, hunching his shoulders and jutting his elbows out as he re-enacted the descent.

The 50,000-hectare (123,550-acre) area of hilly grasslands where the two were spelunking is recognized as the Cradle of Humankind, featuring a network of caves that has yielded nearly 40 percent

of known hominid fossils, according to the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. But the bones in this particular chamber had apparently remained undiscovered until Tucker entered it.

Inside what is now known as the Dinaledi chamber, Tucker's headlamp illuminated pure white rock formations. Tucker and Hunter, who also braved the narrow chute, were excited to find new caving terrain. Then they saw the bones scattered on the chamber floor.

"You could see half of a skull sticking out of the floor," Tucker said. "Of course, at that time we had no idea what we had found. ... What interested us at first was the fact that these were quite large bones. How does something that has no lights, no protective equipment like we had get in here?"

An almost complete mandible told the cavers that they had found something almost human. Their camera battery had died so a week later they made their way through the cave again, and photographed their find. They sent the photos to geologist Pedro Boshoff, who alerted paleontologist Lee Berger, who went onto become the lead paleontologist on the discovery of *Homo naledi*. It was only when the cavers saw Berger's excitement that they realized just how big their discovery was. At the press conference announcing the discovery of *Homo naledi*, a potential new member of the human family tree, Tucker was joined by other cavers who volunteered on the excavation for nearly two years. Berger called them "underground astronauts." □

Actor Danny Glover in Nigeria to star in movie about Ebola

TOM ODULA

Associated Press

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — U.S. actor Danny Glover said Thursday that he is in Nigeria to star in a movie based on people who risked and sacrificed their lives to stop the spread of Ebola in Africa's most populous country.

Glover said he is proud to take part in the film, called "93 Days," because of the achievements made by the real-life characters. Nigerian actress Bimbo Akintola will portray Dr. Stella Ameyo Adadevoh, who along with her team diagnosed the first Ebola case in Nigeria.

Adadevoh put the patient under quarantine, and stubbornly refused to discharge the Liberian man who was sick with the infection despite pressure.

Adadevoh eventually died along with three other hospital staff that had contracted the disease. Her actions ensured that the fast-spreading viral infection was quickly contained. Glover will portray the director of the hospital where Adadevoh worked.

Akintola said the movie is a story of how Nigeria—a

country where many institutions have weakened due to endemic corruption and ethnic strife — triumphed over the spread of Ebola, which ravaged her West African neighbors of Guinea, Sierra-Leone

and doing this incredible thing for Nigeria," Akintola said.

She said the movie will be about courage in the face of death. "The doctors at First Consult (hospital) didn't ask for an Ebola pa-

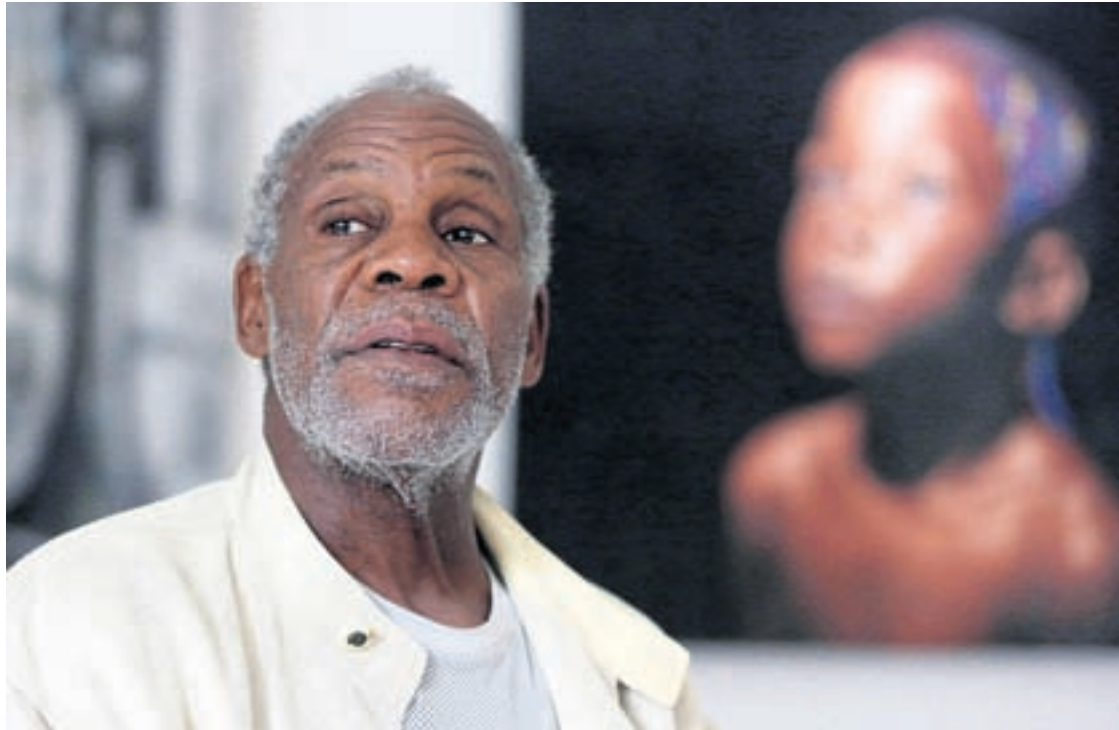
About 12,000 people fly out of Nigeria daily to different corners of the globe, Akintola said, adding that an Ebola outbreak in Nigeria would have had a devastating effect on the world. According to the World

populous country and its newest economic powerhouse. For a disease outbreak, it is also a powder keg. The number of people living in Lagos — around 21 million — is almost as large as the populations of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone combined," WHO said last year in a publication about the outbreak.

Lagos also is characterized by a large population living in crowded and unsanitary conditions in many slums, it said.

Thousands of people move in and out of Lagos, Africa's largest city, every day, constantly looking for work or markets for their products in a busy metropolis with frequent traffic gridlocks, said WHO, adding that officials were worried how they would manage to trace people who had come into contact with persons infected with Ebola in order place them in isolation.

"The last thing anyone in the world wants to hear is the two words, 'Ebola' and 'Lagos' in the same sentence," said WHO, quoting Jeffrey Hawkins, the United States Consul General in Nigeria at the time. □



U.S. actor Danny Glover speaks to The Associated Press during an interview in Lagos, Nigeria Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015.
Associated Press

and Liberia

"Nigerians acted as one. There was nothing about you being from different ethnicity or different political party, it was about Nigerians just standing up

and Liberia. They weren't expecting it. But they stood up to the plate when it turned out the patient had Ebola. No one run away. That is courage in the face of death," Akintola said.

Health Organization, news of the first Ebola case in Nigeria on July 23 last year rocked public health communities all around the world.

"Nigeria is Africa's most

'War Room' filmmakers build on previous faith film successes

LINDSEY BAHR

AP Film Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Faith-based movies that succeed at the box office shouldn't be a surprise anymore, but "War Room," a Christian family drama about marriage, has proved to be somewhat miraculous.

After "War Room" nearly beat "Straight Outta Compton" in its opening weekend, it defied expectations in its second week in theaters and rose to the top spot over the holiday weekend. Its strongest day wasn't the opening either. It was Labor Day — a full 11 days after "War Room" was released — that saw the most people buying tickets.

"That's just not supposed to happen," said Rich Peluso, senior vice president of Sony's AFFIRM Films, which



This photo provided by courtesy of AFFIRM Films/Provident Films shows, Alex, left, and Stephen Kendrick, co-founders of Kendrick Brothers.
Associated Press

produced "War Room" with Provident Films. "I could certainly fudge it and tell you how smart we are and how we predicted this but no, everybody is surprised."

This is the latest success from Christian filmmakers and brothers Alex and Stephen Kendrick, whose 2008 film "Fireproof" earned over \$33 million on a \$500K

budget, and 2011's "Courageous," which took in \$34.5 million on a \$2 million budget. "War Room" is already well on its way to surpassing both.

As of Tuesday, "War Room," which cost \$3.5 million to produce, has earned \$28.7 million. Many are seeing it multiple times and bringing back their family and groups of friends, Peluso

said. Also, when the film came so close to beating "Compton," there was a concerted effort by AFFIRM and religious leaders to encourage supporters to turn out and help make it No. 1.

"It's just a great story of a film that really filled a void in the marketplace, with a message that the audience could really get behind," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box office tracker Rentrak. "There is a huge contingency of the American population who do not go to movies. They have been burned too many times," Stephen Kendrick said. "Christians love good movies, but too often their faith is ridiculed or mocked... Alex and I are trying to make the kind of movies that we want to go see." The perception

that successful faith-based films seem to come out of nowhere is born out of the reality that they are very difficult to track accurately. Days before a film's release, most studios have a solid idea of exactly how its film will perform opening weekend. Faith-based audiences prove more elusive to traditional metrics.

"Tracking does a really good job of looking at frequent movie goers and what their interests are. With faith-based films, we're bringing infrequent customers into the theaters," Peluso said.

To generate buzz about "War Room," all parties relied on the traditional grassroots marketing techniques that have proved successful for other Christian films, including longstanding relationships with religious leaders nationwide. □

Billy Porter says goodbye to role that 'taught me to dream'

MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — There comes a time in every man's life when he must hang up his flaming red, knee-high stiletto boots. That time is fast approaching for Billy Porter.

The Tony Award-winning actor will leave Broadway's "Kinky Boots" in November, but saying goodbye has left him "anxiety-ridden." It's been no ordinary job.

"This show and this character has represented something that's so far beyond anything that I could have ever imagined," he said. "This show has taught me to dream beyond anything that I could imagine."

Porter has seen the world change while playing the cross-dressing Lola — he calls her Miss Lola — in

the Tony Award-winning musical about a British shoe factory that retrofits itself into a maker of drag queen footwear.

The show recently reached its 1,000th performance, and Porter estimates he's played Miss Lola 900 times. Wayne Brady will take over the role.

Jerry Mitchell, who directed and choreographed "Kinky Boots," has been a friend of Porter's for years and invited him to audition for Miss Lola. He was instantly swayed: "It was just that moment when you know the artist and the material are a perfect match," Mitchell said. "I said, 'This is the guy.'"

In the two years on Broadway since the show began spreading its message of unconditional love and acceptance, huge steps



In this June 9, 2013, file photo, Billy Porter poses with his award for best actor in a musical for "Kinky Boots" at the 67th Annual Tony Awards in New York. **Associated Press**

a 3,000-seat theater," he said. "Twenty years ago, I was fag-bashed down the street going into a gay bar. There's a difference."

The show has been a life-changer in other ways, too. Porter won a best leading-man Tony Award and put out a CD. He got a play he wrote produced off-Broadway and directed two works by others. He booked concerts.

More personally, he has a boyfriend now and a personal assistant — "It's so crazy that I have an assistant and I need one," he said, laughing. He's also in the shape of his life, thanks to eight shows a week in which he dances in 6-inch heels and changes in and out of wigs and dresses all night.

"I look the best I've ever looked in my entire life," he said. "When your workout is your job, it's way easier to stay in shape."

Porter has a gig waiting when he leaves "Kinky Boots": He will join an all-star lineup for a reworking of the 1920s musical "Shuffle Along" with Audra McDonald, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Brandon Victor Dixon and Joshua Henry.

"I'm trading my high heels for tap shoes. I haven't tapped in 23 years," he said, laughing. "At least I'll stay in shape. I have that to look forward to." □

Dennis Greene, founding member of Sha Na Na, dies at 66

DAYTON, Ohio (AP) — A founding member of the retro-rock/doo-wop group Sha Na Na who later became a movie studio executive and law professor, has died. Dennis Greene was 66.

Greene's nephew, Edward Robinson, says his uncle died Saturday in Columbus after a brief illness.

Greene performed with Sha Na Na at Woodstock in 1969 and with the group in the 1978 movie "Grease."

Robinson said Thursday the New York City native left the group in 1984 to study law and later worked as a Columbia Pictures vice president. He said Greene appreciated opportunities from his music career, but law was his passion.

Greene began teaching law at the University of Dayton in 2001.

Funeral services set for Sept. 19 at Church of the Immaculate Conception in New York City will be public. □



In this May 6, 1998, file photo, Dennis Greene, former lead singer for 50s revival group Sha Na Na, poses at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Ore., where he was a law professor. **Associated Press**

have been made for marriage equality and transgender rights.

"It's an astonishing thing to know that in the history books I will be a part of that, we will be a part of that and Miss Lola will be a part of that," said Porter. "She was a character who was able to be transcendent enough and human enough — in her own skin

— to embrace the bigots, to embrace the negative, and turn that around."

A few weeks ago, Porter joined the national tour of "Kinky Boots" in his hometown of Pittsburgh and could feel the change. He reconnected with relatives and had "real true healing moments."

"We sold out the Benedum Center in two days — that's

Britney Spears signs on for 2 more years in Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Pop star Britney Spears is staying in Las Vegas for at least another two years.

Caesars Entertainment Corp. announced Thursday that Spears has extended her residency at the Planet Hollywood casino-hotel on the Las Vegas Strip through December 2017.

The company says Spears divulged during her Wednesday night show that she would be sticking around Sin City a couple

more years.

Her "Piece of Me" show debuted December 2013. Tickets cost \$59 to \$229, not including fees.

For those who have seen the choreographed show of Spears' hits before, Caesars says it will soon be re-imagined with new elements.

Another pop music legend, Jennifer Lopez, is set to begin her own Las Vegas residency at Planet Hollywood beginning in January. □



Britney Spears arrives at the MTV Video Music Awards at the Microsoft Theater on Sunday, Aug. 30, 2015, in Los Angeles. **Associated Press**



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